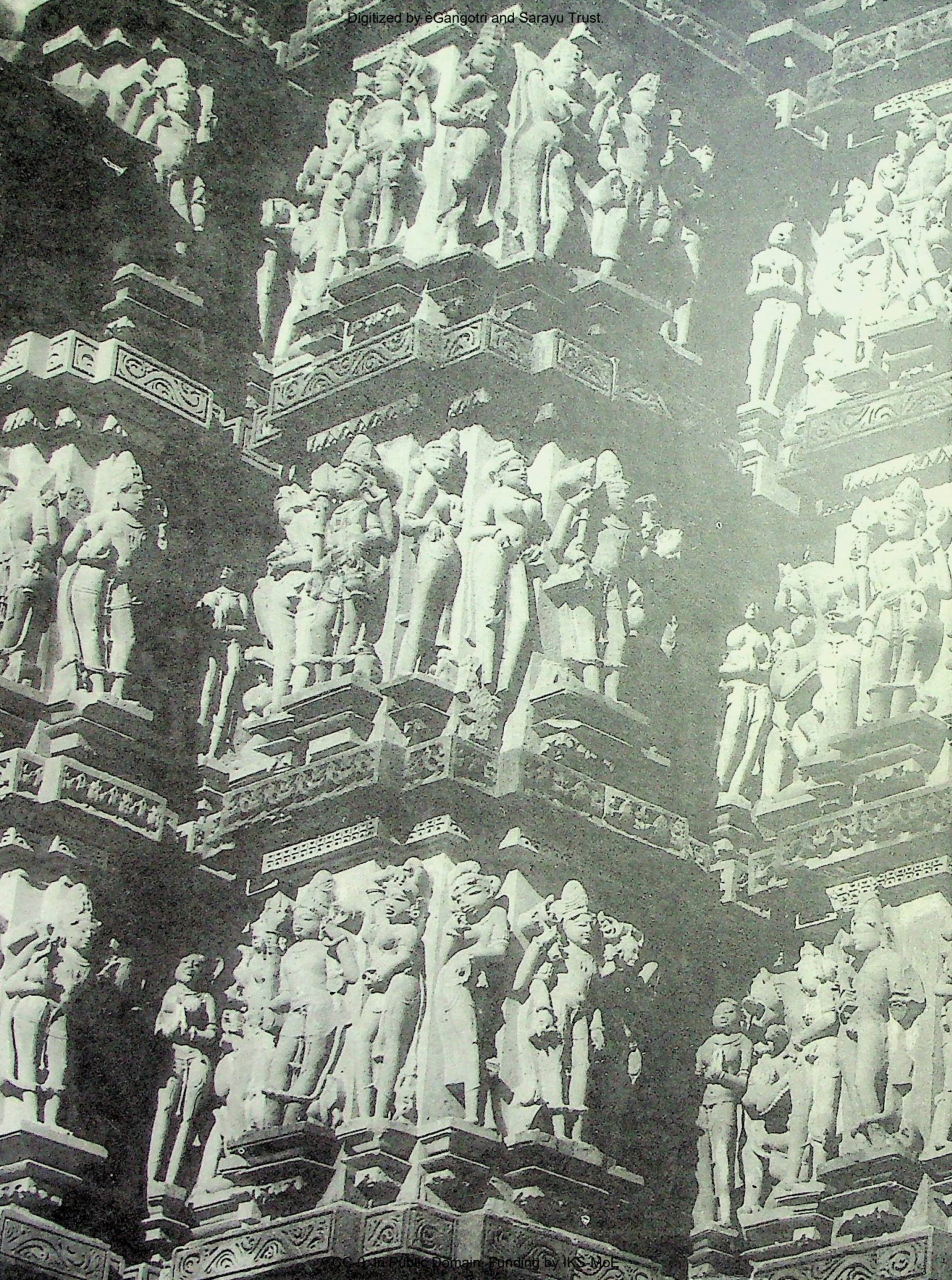
Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

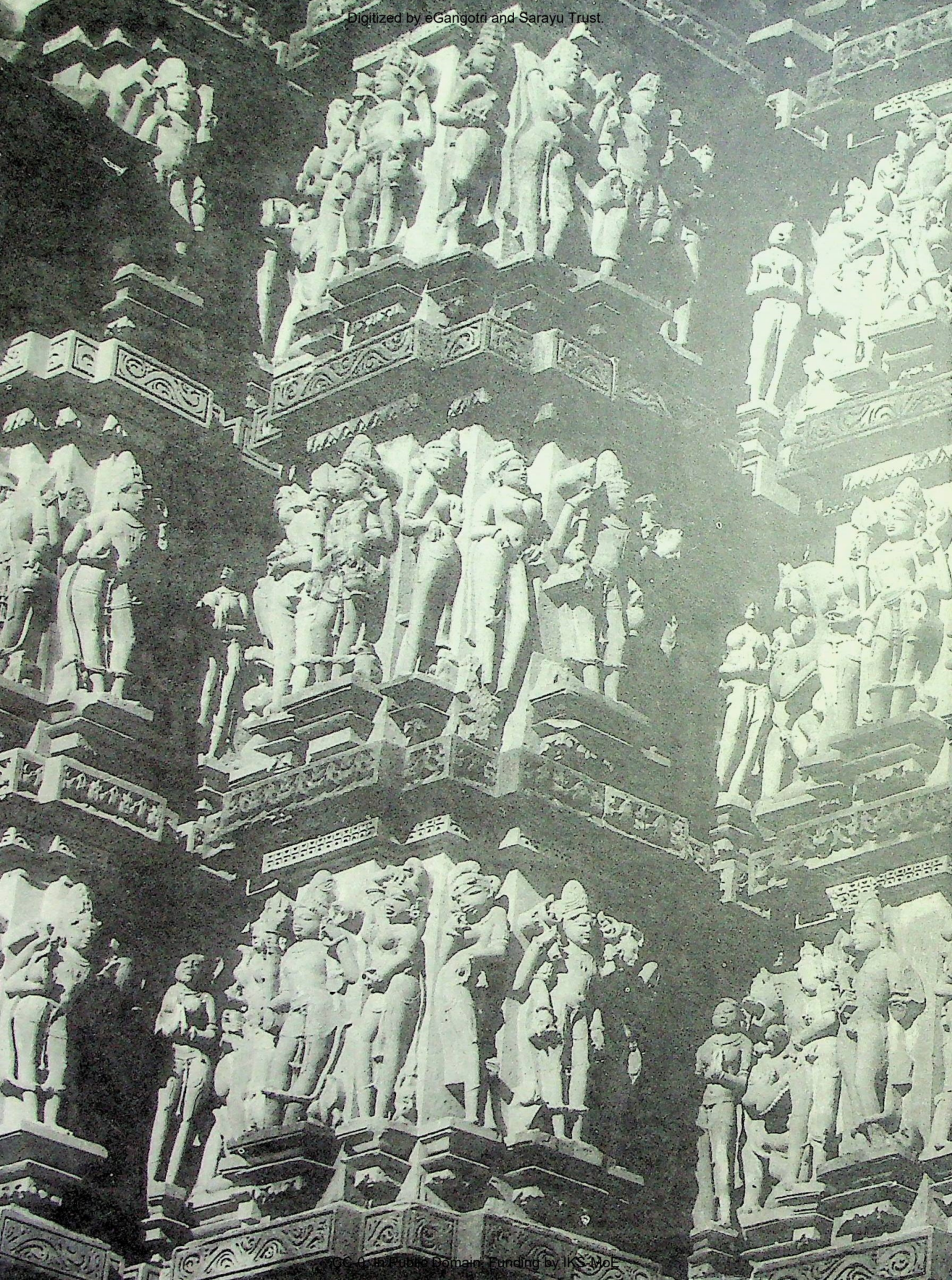


CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

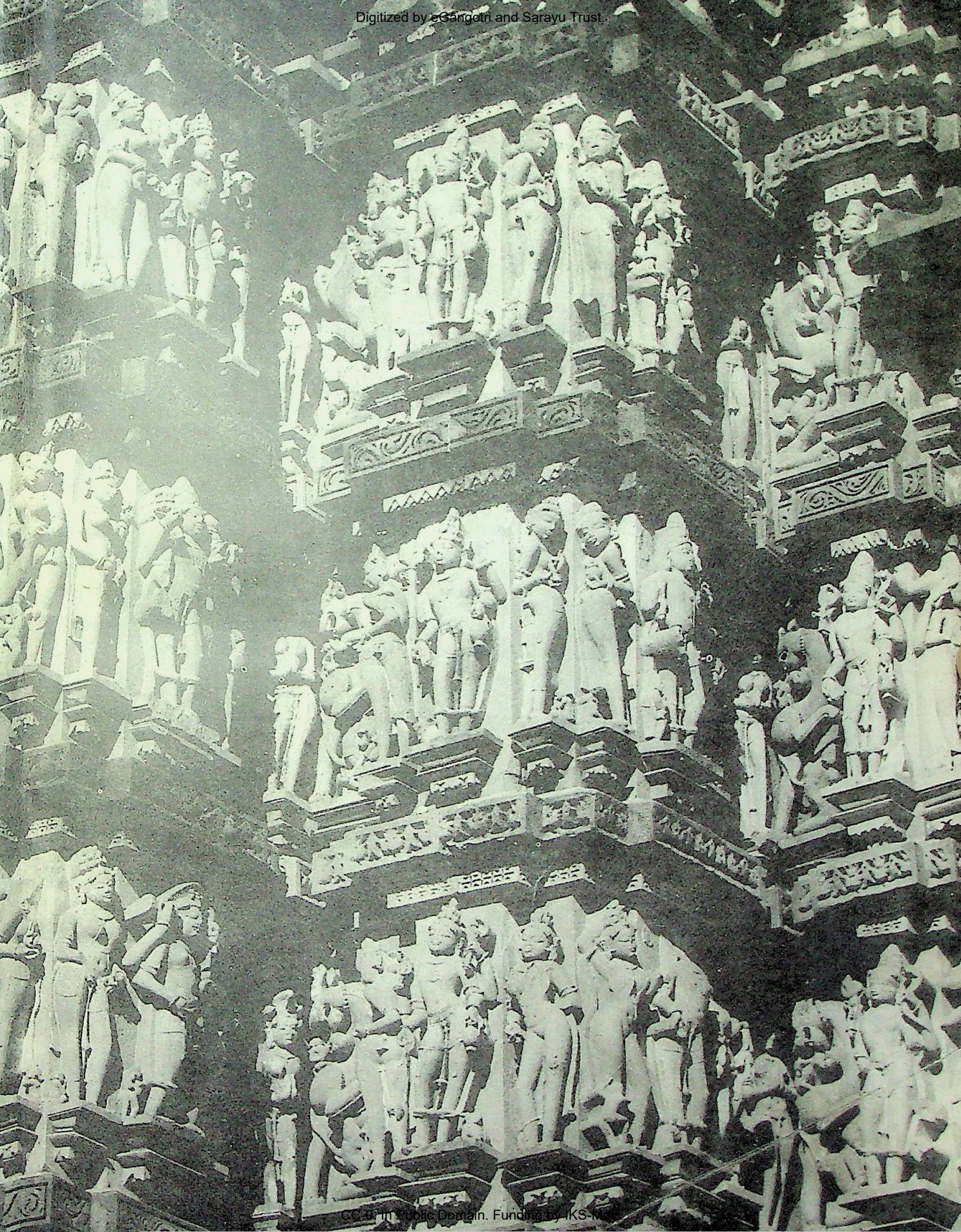
CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



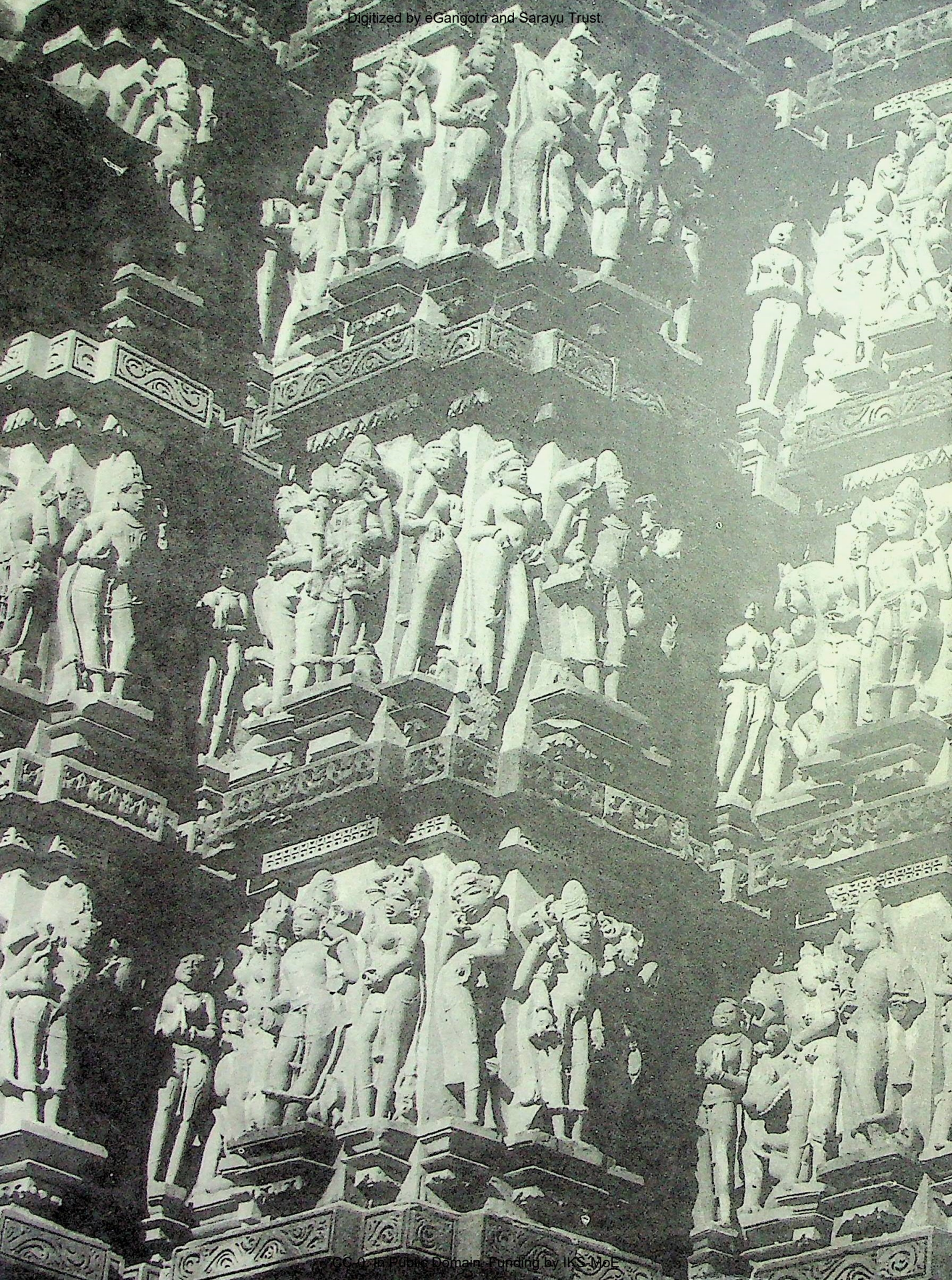
CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-Mo

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

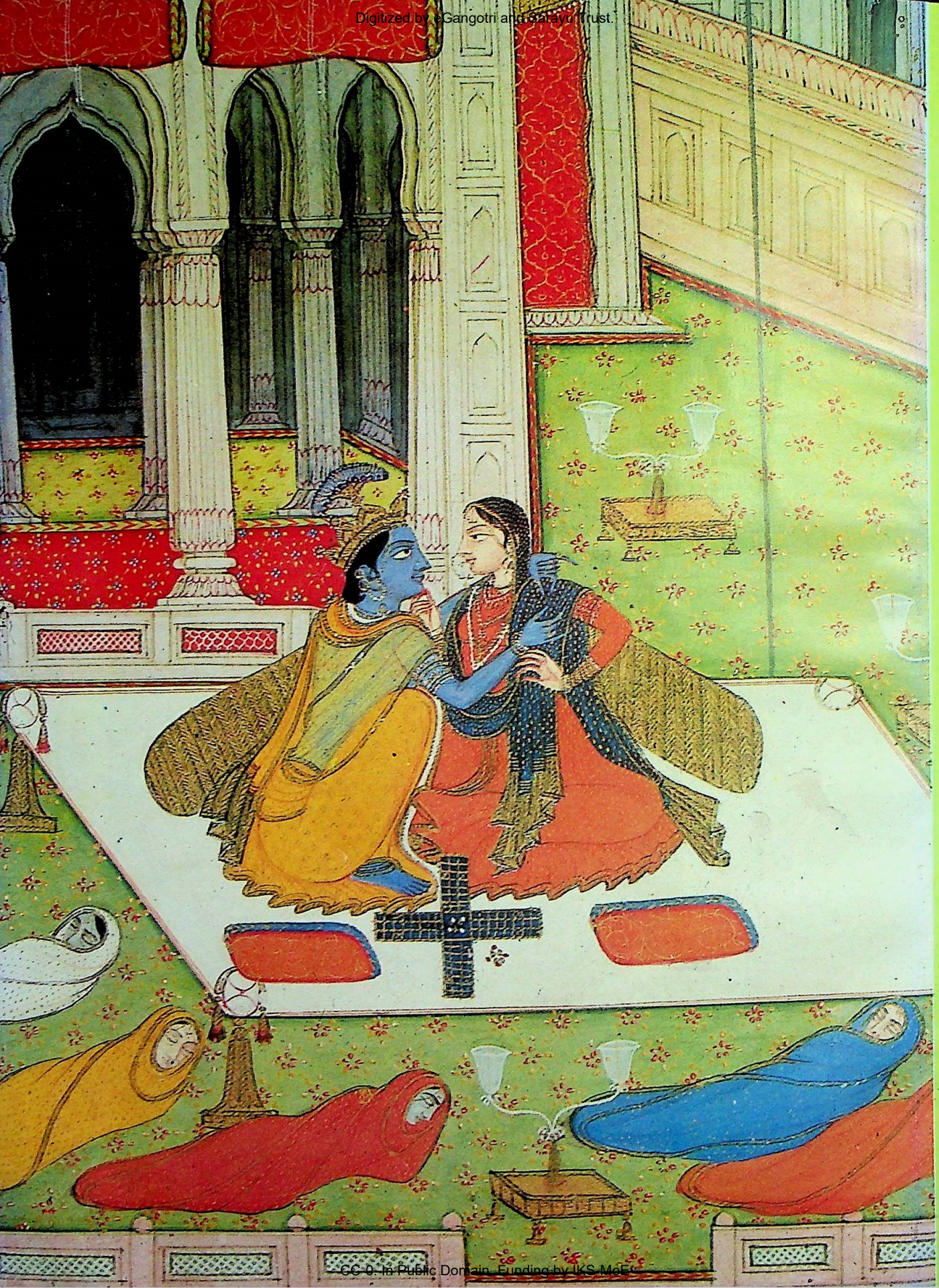


CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

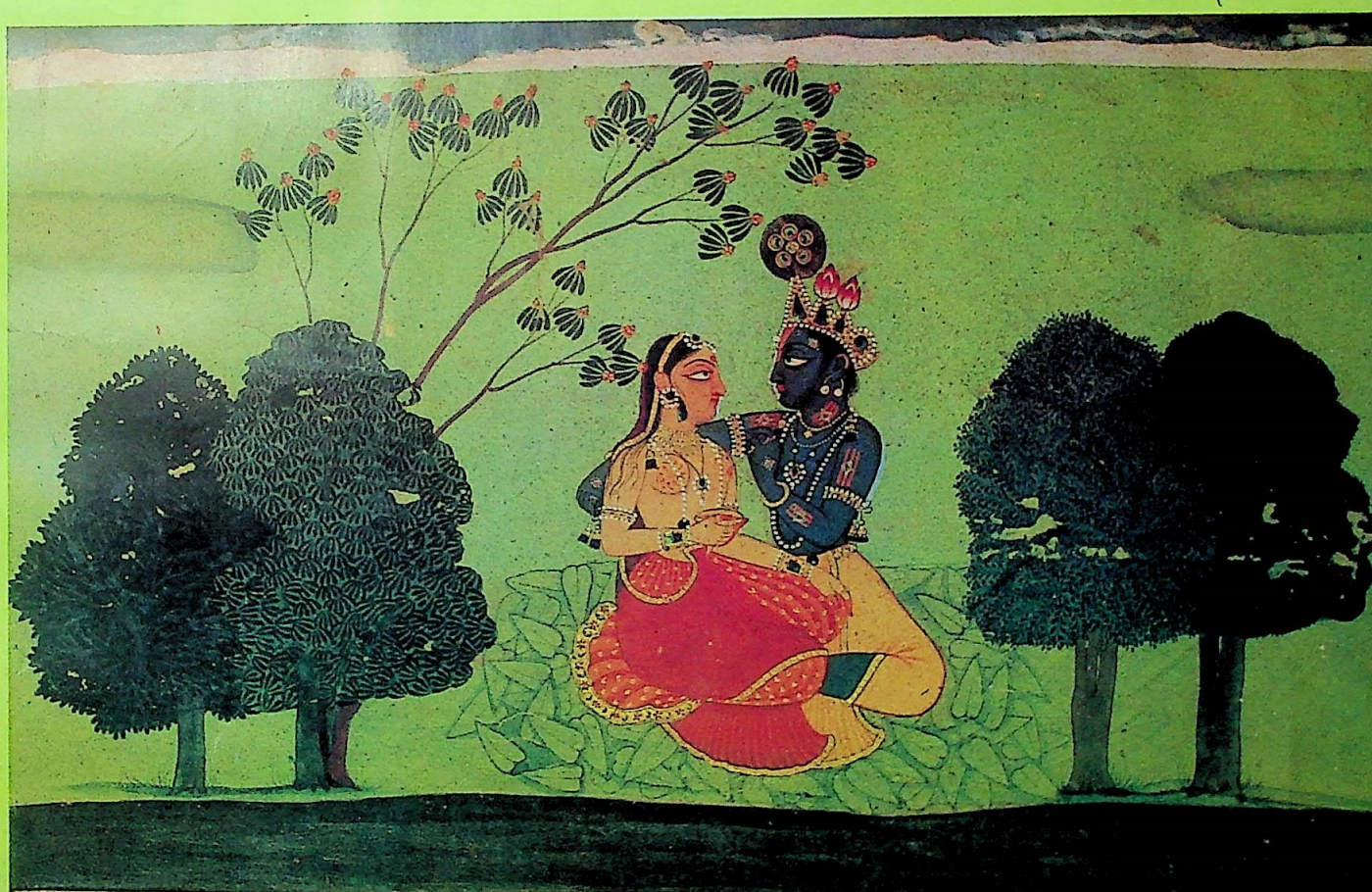
S8448
L. - 6 (12).
S. - 1.
B - 5.

Kama Yoga

Some notes on the philosophical basis of 'Erotic' Art of India

Mulk Raj Anand

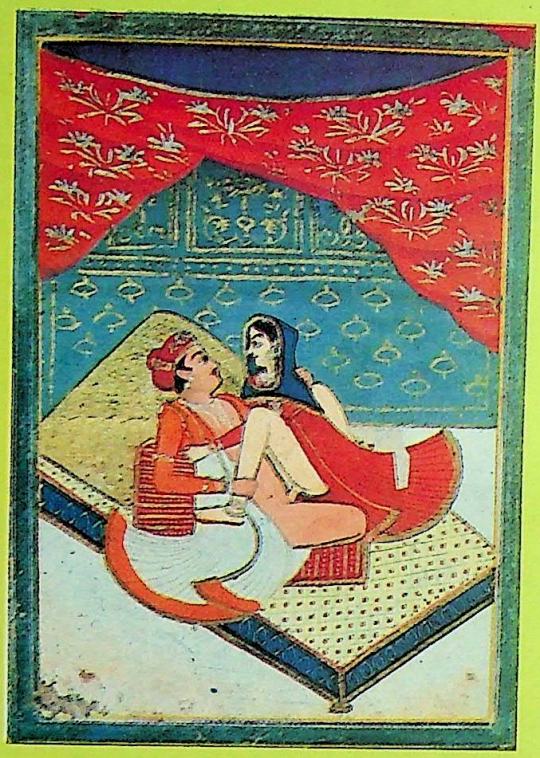
Cat No 17311
16/8/12



Aspect Publications • Arnold Publishers

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



700.42530
TC

70'

Silk.

Art

25 वर्षों से राष्ट्र की सेवा में समर्पित
RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY LIBRARY FOUNDATION
दान द्वारा
राजा राममोहन राय
पुस्तकालय प्रतिष्ठान
GIFTED BY:
RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY LIBRARY FOUNDATION
BLOCK DD-34
SECTOR-1 SALTLAKE
CALCUTTA-700 064
25 YEARS SERVICE TO THE N

Simultaneously published by

ARNOLD PUBLISHERS (INDIA) PVT. LTD.
AB/9, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi-110029
ISBN 81 7031 263 9

ASPECT PUBLICATIONS LTD.
P.O. Box No. 609, Edinburgh EHI5 3SN
ISBN 185529 0715

© Mulk Raj Anand 1991
First published 1991

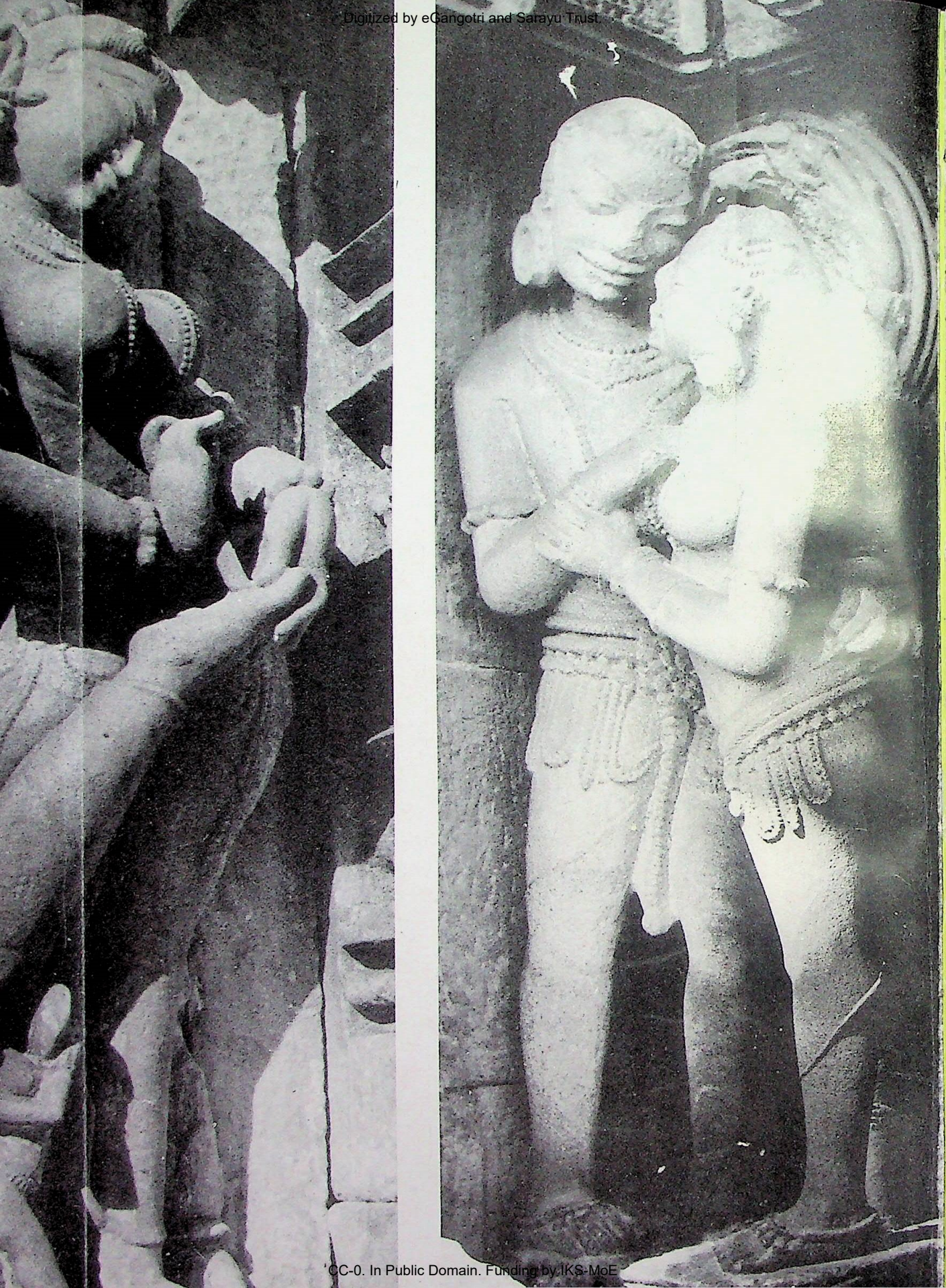
Published by Gulab Vazirani and printed in India by
Delux Printers, New Delhi.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

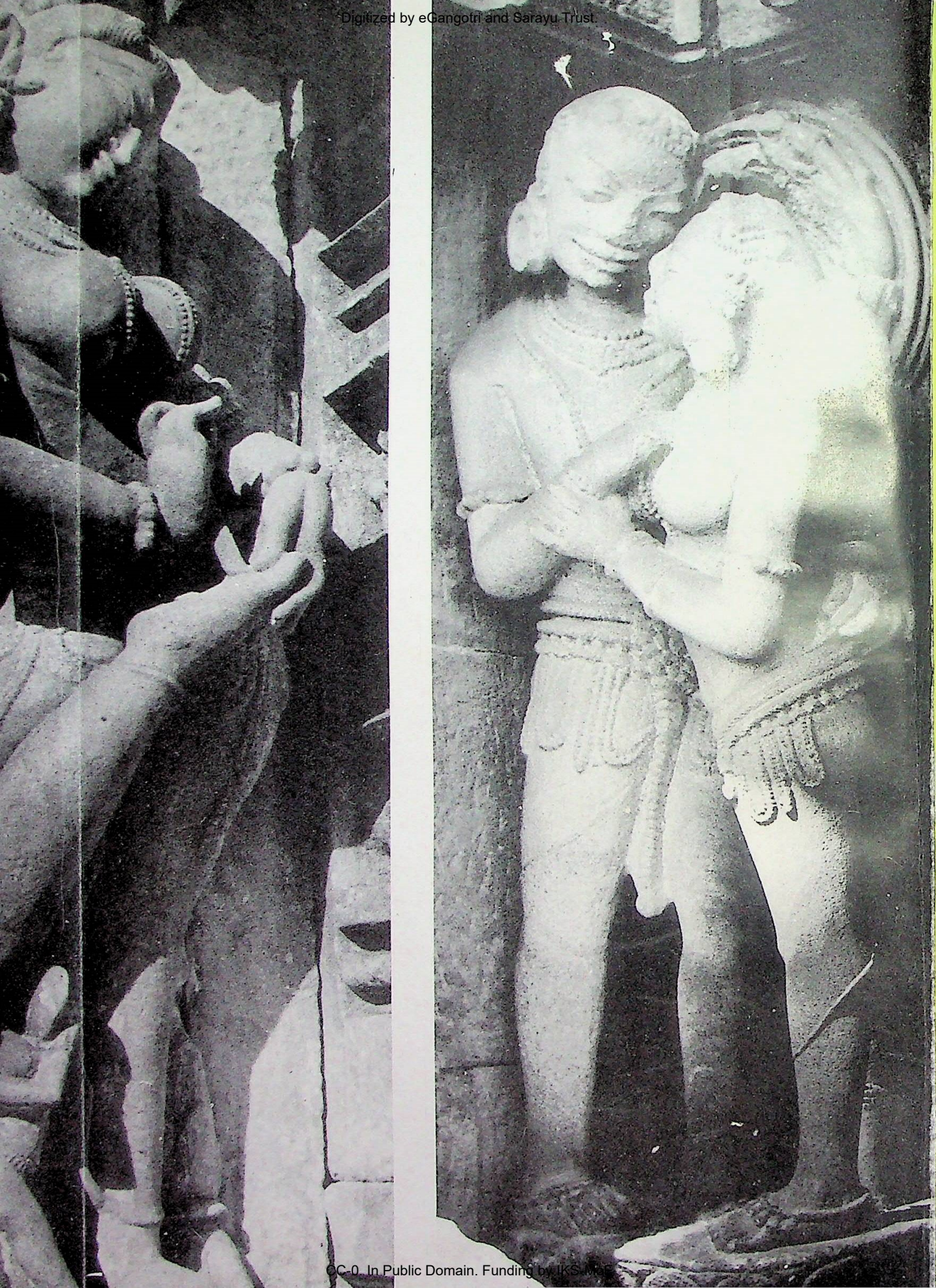


CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitized by IKS

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

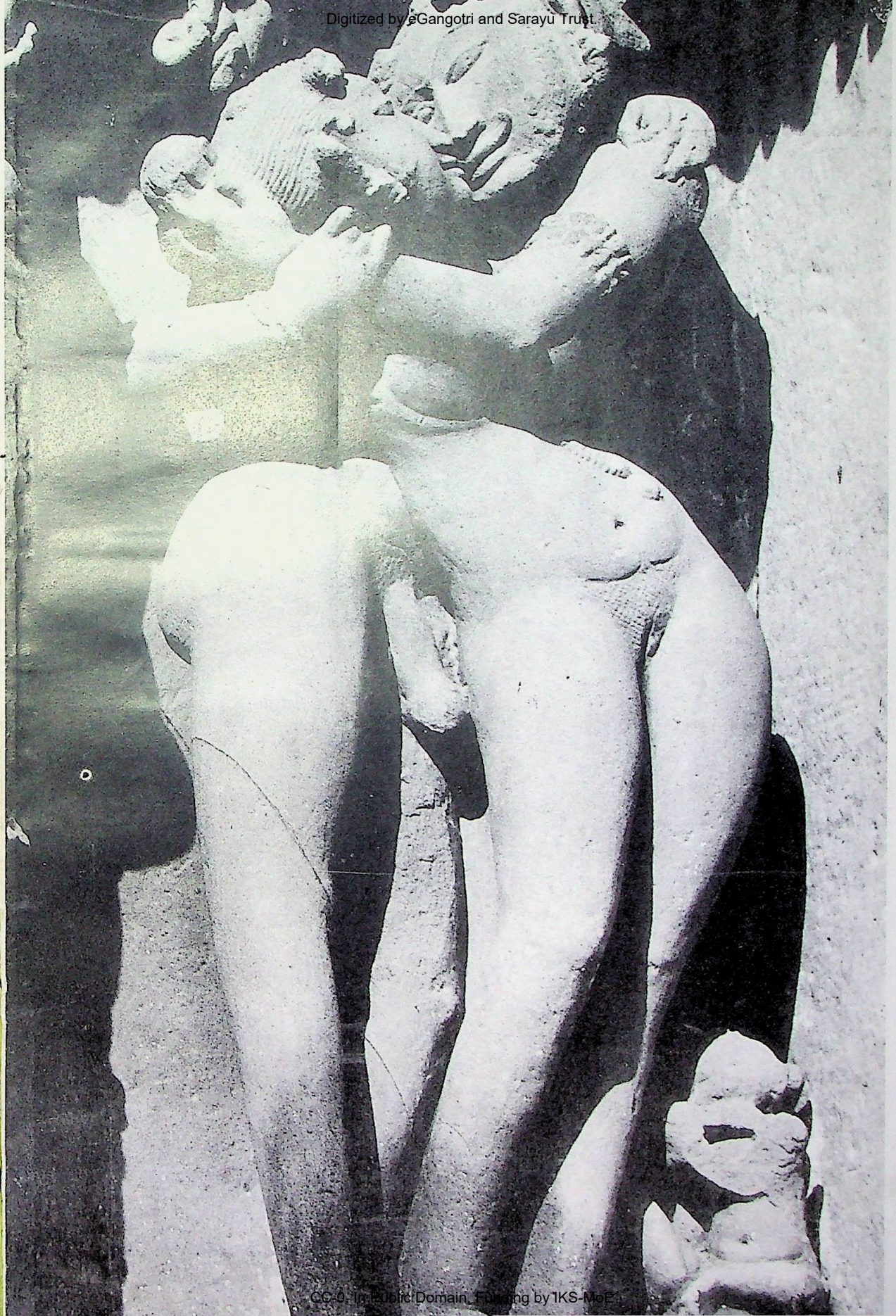
Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Fu... by IKS...

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

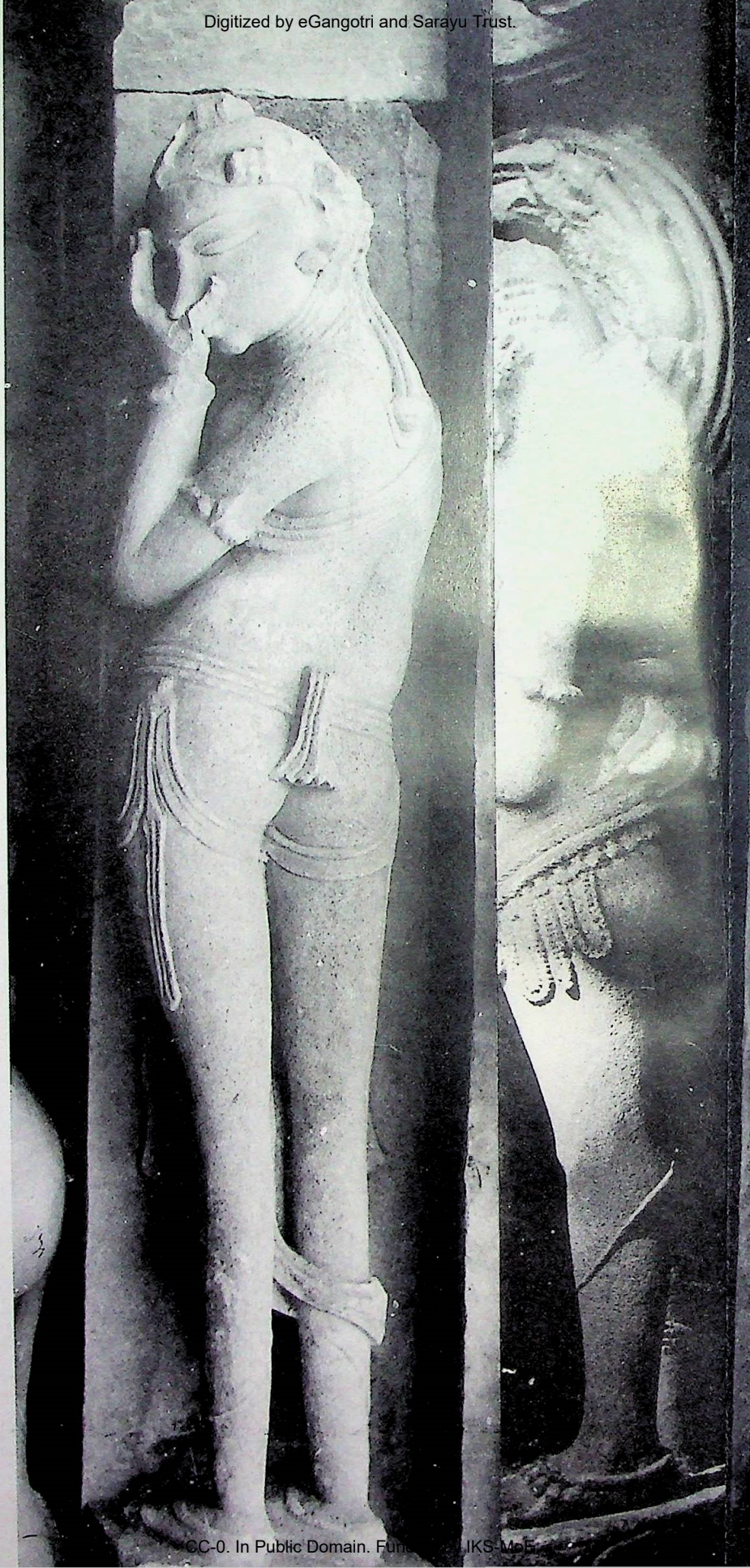
CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



CC-0. In Public Domain. Fund... IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

The flavours of love—Sringara rasa:

Of the flavours suggested by the sage Bharata in the 2nd century A.D. as the moods from which dance and music and plastic and pictorical arts draw their inspiration, the Sringara rasa was the favourite mood in sculputures and paintings from the Gupta period, 3rd-5th century downwards to the early madiaeval period.

The rasa of wonder (Adbhuta), of humour (Hasya), are often treated as accompaniments of preliminaries of the love rasa. The lovely girls blacking the eyes, going to the bath, scratching the back, playing with the ball, taking a thorn out, tying the gungroo (bells) before the dance, and looking in the mirror are shown in their delight of play and pleasure, in natural acts of the perpetual flow of the life impulse, in the heart of nature.

The couples shown approaching the moment of union with the preliminary expressions of longing seem tranquil because the great delight of the ultimate moment was not to be reached by lusty vigour but through deep ardent meditation. From the hidden urges unfolding in desire, the couples bend to each other in embrace with exquisite grace of dedicated spirits, almost to show that man nature requires woman nature for completeness of being in the divine.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

In Public Domain. F

The earlier notes on love were dedicated to W.G. Archer and M.S. Randhawa:
I add the names of Prakash Kothari.

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

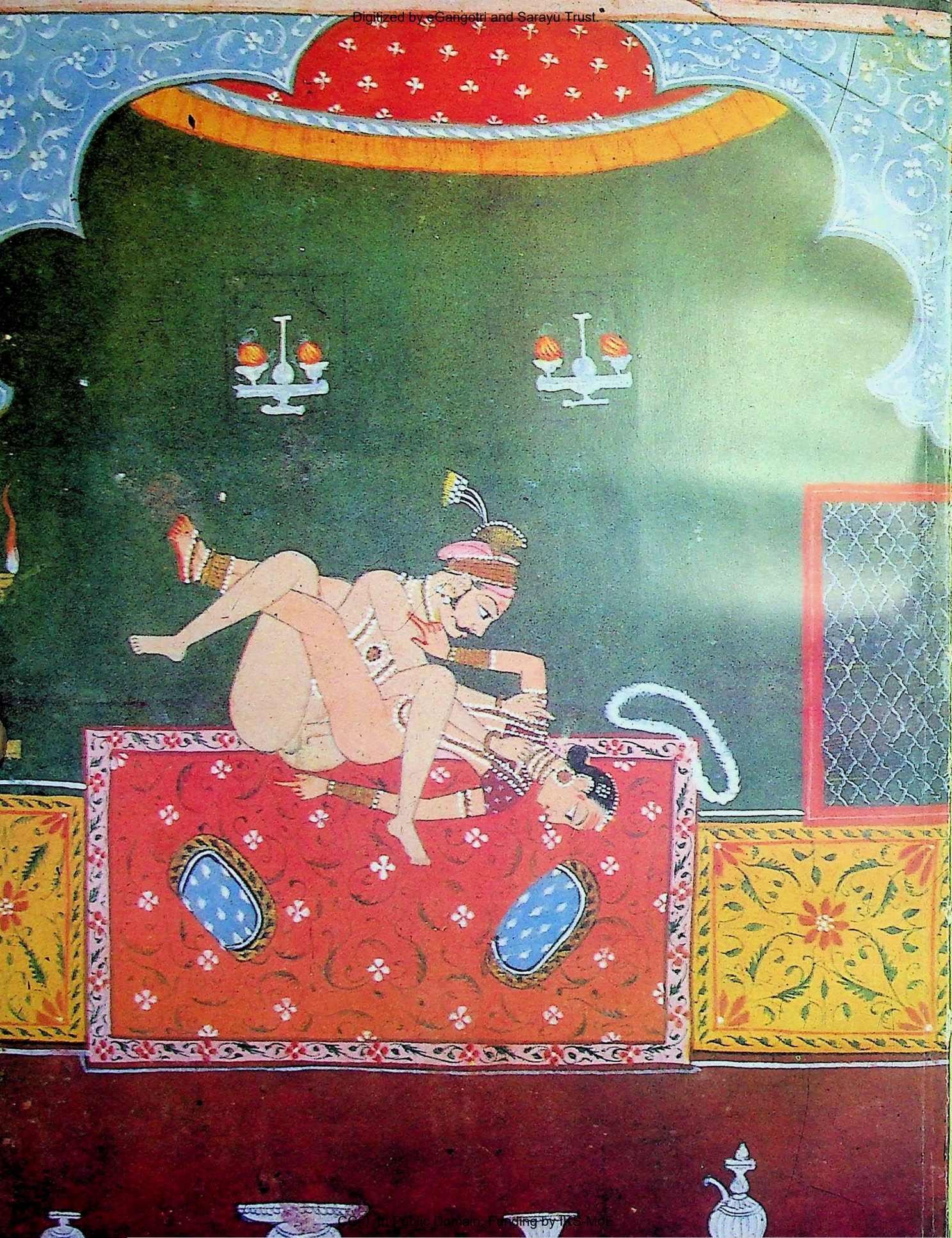
Public Domain. F

The earlier notes on love were dedicated to W.G. Archer and M.S. Randhawa: I add the names of Prakash Kothari.

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Digitized by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

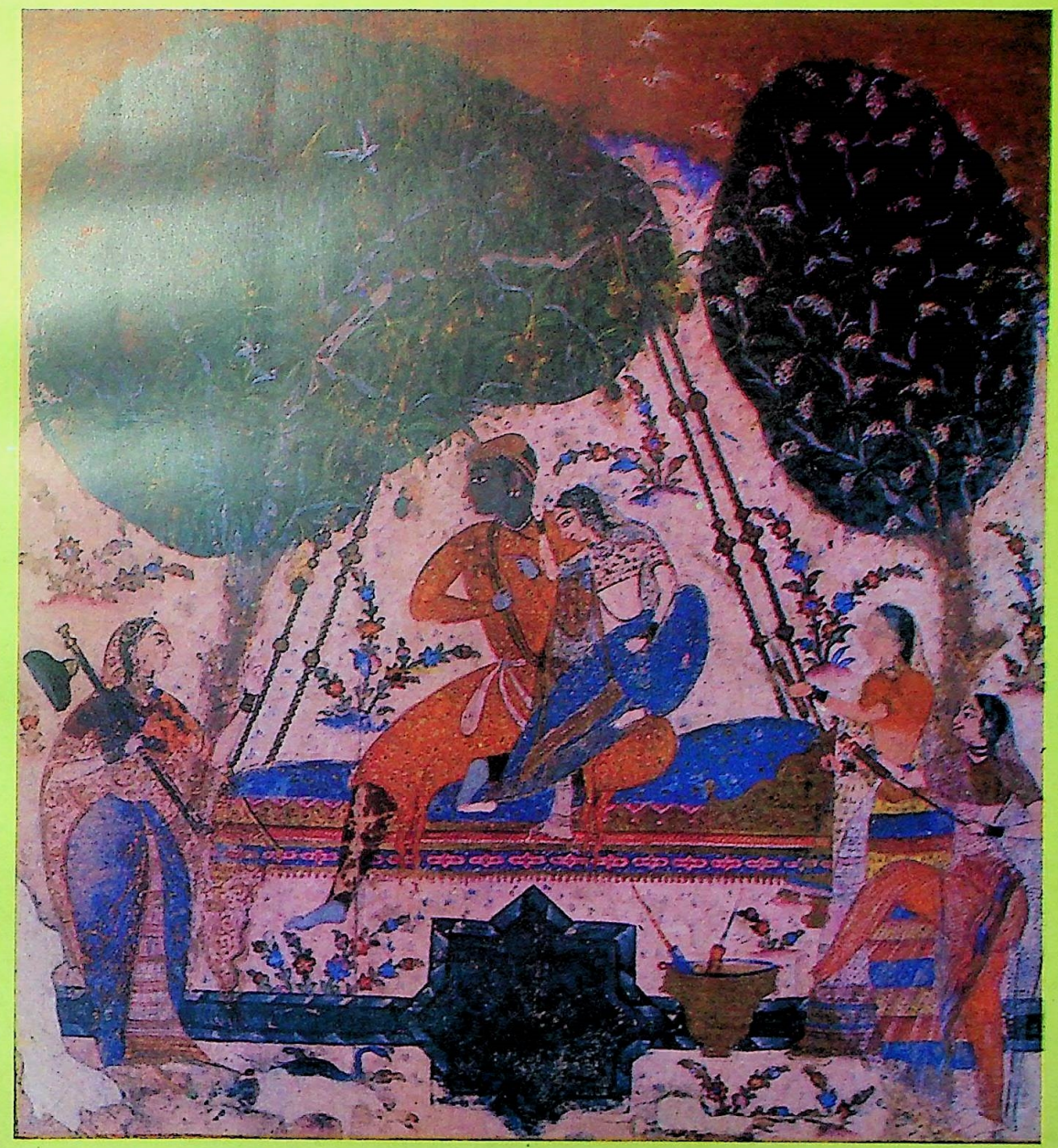


CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Contents

Preface	19	9. Gupta period	65
1. The natural human passions	27	10. Vaishnavsim	72
2. Sex in Indian Art	33	11. The loves of Krishna	75
3. Nature gods	35	12. Early mediaeval period	79
4. Love in the epics	45	13. The impact of Jantras	90
5. Mantras	50	14. Kok Shastra	93
6. Buddha's path	53	15. Love gods	95
7. Jain faith	57	16. The assault of the West	98
8. Yoga meditation	59	17. Pragmatic ego	109



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

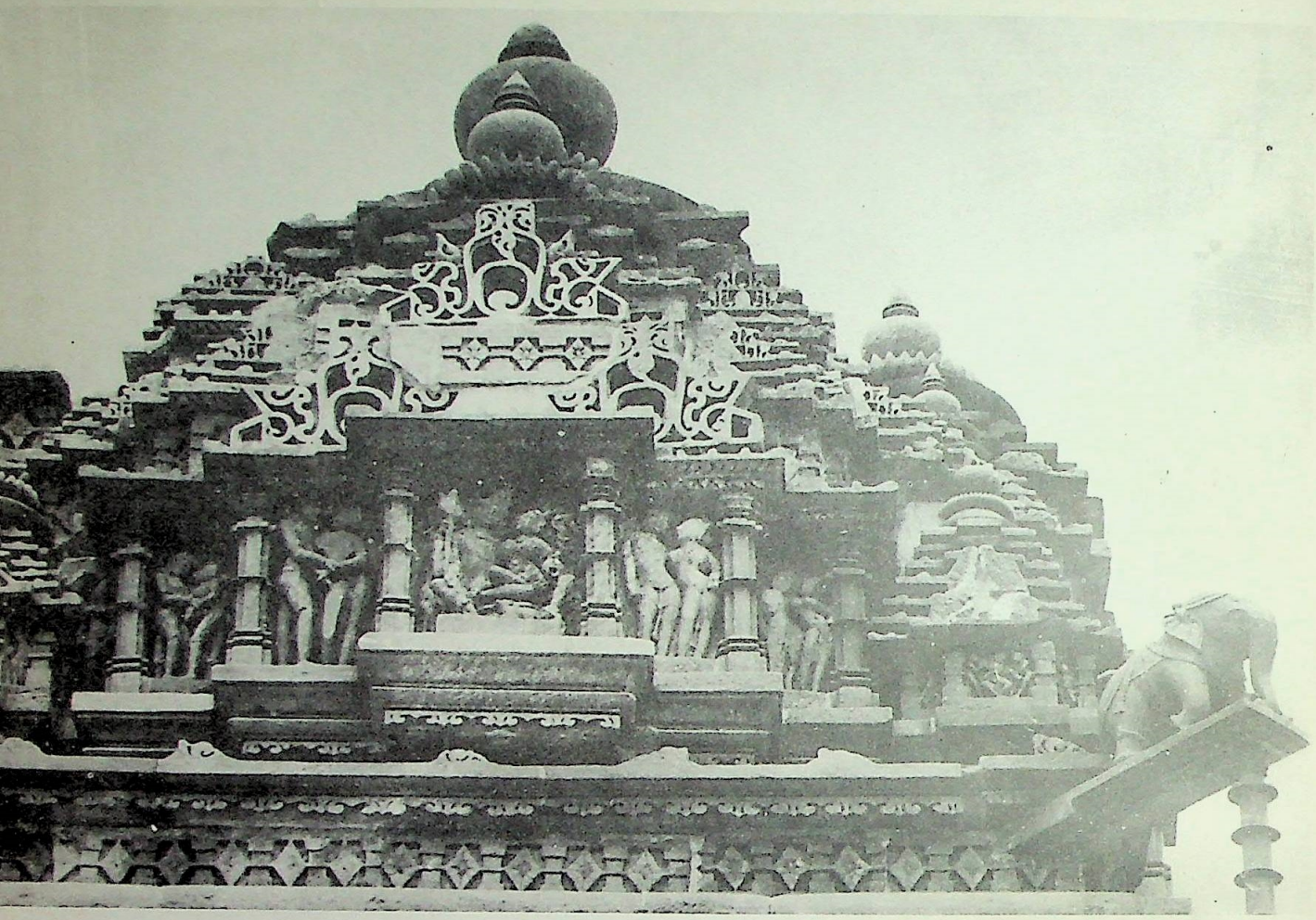
Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

PLATES

1. Lovers, Rajasthani P1
2. Krishna and Radha, Kangra P2
3. Krishna and Radha, Bisholi P3
4. Raja and Rani, Rajasthani P4.
5. The Flavours of love P5-12.
6. Lovers P13.
7. Coitus, Rajasthani P14
8. Lovers on a Swing, Deccani P15
9. The Kiss, Ellora P16
10. Shiva, Konark P20
11. The Embrace, Orrisa P23
12. A Lady, Moghul P24
13. Palm Leaf, Orrisa P25
14. After Adornement, Rajasthani P26
15. Ivory Carving, Begram P27
16. Yakshi, Bharut P30
17. Buxom Movement Mathura P32
18. Dancing Couple P33
19. A Couple, Nagarjunakonda Kunda P16
20. Flying Spirits, Badami P34
21. Coitus, Orrissa Palm Leaf P41
22. Lovers—Ivory Carving, Sirinagam Temple P42
23. Classical Figure, Indian Museum Calcutta P43
24. Nag Nagini in Embrace, South India P44
25. Krishna and Radha, Kangra P61
26. Naked Love, Rajasthani P62.
27. Lovers, Rajasthani P63
28. Raja-Rani, Pahari P64
29. Raja-Rani, South India P81
30. Lakshmi, Wood carving India P82
31. Lovers, Wood Carving South India P83
32. Yub-Yam Emprace, Tibetan
33. Jamini Roy—Krishna Radha P101
34. Amrita Sher Gil—Bride P102
35. Tagore—Frustrated love P102
36. Souza—Beauty and Beast
37. Hussain—Shiva Parvati P103
38. Padamse—Shiva Parvati P104
39. Kiss, Ellora P110
40. Chausath Yogni Temple P112.
41. Temple, Khajuraho P114-115.
42. Shiv parvati, Khajuraho P116
43. Festival of Love, Khajuraho P118
44. Tender Kiss, Khajuraho P119
45. Passionate Kiss, Khajuraho P121
46. Touching, Khajuraho P122
47. Coitius, Khajuraho P123
48. Yogic Love Stance, Khajuraho P124
49. Yoga, Bhoga, Khajuraho,
50. Higher Yoga, Khajuraho, P127
51. Furious Love, Khajuraho, P128
52. Adbhuta Rasa, P129
53. Yogini, Bhubaneshwar P130
54. Temple, Bhubaneshwar P132
55. Female, Bhubaneshwar P133
56. A Beauty, Bhubaneshwar P134
57. Temple, Konark P136-137
58. Charriot wheel Konarak P139-140
59. Festival of Love Konarak P141
60. Woman with Flute, Khajuraho P142
61. Cymbals, Khajuraho P143
62. Woman Drummer, Khajuraho P144
63. Hero Radiant, Khajuraho P145
64. Lovers in Embrace, Khajuraho P146
65. Nag Nagini, Khajuraho P147
66. Raja-Rani, Khajuraho P148
67. Toching for Excitement, Khajuraho P149
68. Tender Grace, Khajuraho P151
69. Passive Woman, Khajuraho P152

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



Acknowledgements

After being defrauded by a Paris-Geneva Publisher, I have had warm and consciencious co-operation from my present Publisher, Gulab Vazirani.

As always, my designer colleague, Dolly Sahiar, has laboured hard to create a new book from her collection of photos and colour transparencies, and by designing a lovely edition, which has been a joy to put together.

And by one of those co-incidences which often happen to me, a brilliant young researcher on Khajuraho, Shobita Punja, came to me with her research paper on the Chandela shrines, when I was finalising the captions. She confirmed my hypothesis that the temples in Chatterpur area were all dedicated to Shiva. I am grateful to this scholar for her revelations from the *Shiv Puran*.

Mulk Raj Anand

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Preface

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and Sarayu Trust.

COURTESAN,

CC-0. In Public Domain. Panini Kanya Maha Vidyalaya Collection. MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Preface

In a journey to the interior in the twenties, I did a pilgrimage to the early mediaeval temples, the Sun Temple in Konarak, the shrines in Bhubaneshwar and Jagganath Puri in Orissa and then to the seven remains of the hundred and five temples of Khajuraho in the Vindhyachal Hills and jungles.

That journey was urged by the irreverent comments of Sir George Birdwood about distorted Indian images with many heads and hands and Roger Fry's arbitrary judgement that there is no sense of design in Indian sculpture. I had also heard from Dr. K.de B. Codrington, then Keeper of the India Section of the Victoria and Albert Museum, that an officer of the Bengal engineers, Capt. Burt, who had been hunting in the forest area near Chatterpur, had found certain temples in a village called Khajuraho, where he saw some sculptures "which were extremely indecent and offensive."

Naturally, I wanted to see for myself what I had admired in the portfolios on Indian sculptures, the monuments which the sculptor, Eric Gill and Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, had highlighted in their compilation, to confute the censure if those English art critics who had not even seen the originals but passed judgement on them from the hangover of Christian puritan obsessions.

I was wonderstruck by the spectacles of the monumental Kailasa Temple at Ellora and in Elephanta caves, the vast Mahabalipuram rock fresco, the grand Konarak shrine on giant wheels of an imaginary chariot about to fly off towards the sun, the lyrical figures in amorous stances on the temples of Bhubaneshwar and Puri, and the prolific relief carvings of love scenes on all sides of the surviving epic shrines in honour of the God of energy, Shiva, in Khajuraho.

In Khajuraho, I wandered from the ruin of the Chausath Yoginis courtyard from which all the sixty four female devotees of Shiva had disappeared, deploring the vandalism which had robbed the original shrine of Shiva worship in this area. Then I opened my eyes, with sense of wonder to the mysterious impulses which had been the cue of passion behind the collosal Kandariya Mahadeva, the Vishwanatha, Devi Jagadamba, the Chittragupta, the Lakshamana and the so-called Jain shrines which were obviously from Hindu inspiration and not from Jain puritanism. I invoked my imagination to conceive the kind of ethos behind the worship which was carried on here in the mediaeval centuries.

I looked up to the high Mount Meru-like Shikara of the Kandariya Mahadeva Temple, which aspired to touch the sky. I contemplated the intricate relief carvings, on the walls of every temple. At first sight, no play of imagination, no speculation could go beyond the physical presences of intertwining couples, except for a few glimmerings of the psycho-

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

physical hypothesis of the Tantra philosophy in the *Brihadanayaka Upanishad* in which one aphorism had said :

"Only in the embrace of man and woman can God be found".

Contemplation brought echoes of the Shakti-Shakta union cults which Sir John Woodroffe had exposited in his book *Shakti-Shakta* after translating nine volumes of Tantric texts. The conditioned ritual of pleasure, without ego-satisfaction, through secret Yajanas, in which male and female couples celebrated group worship through sex union, vibrated from the back of my head almost in a delirium. I had gone beyond *looking* to *seeing* the reliefs with the undertones of exhilaration to insinuations of desire.

In those middle ages, the earth citizens surviving in the jungles through their faith in the worship of the god of the wilds, Shiva, had invoked his elemental energies in songs and dances attuned to the flow of the life force. The desire for the other, the mate, had to be made holy, and the ideal love was sought to be attained through ceremonies of tender words spoken in warm embraces. The Great delight was to be in abounding grace cultivated with prayers and not through violent assaults of the male on the female, for orgiastic assertion. The bloodstream had to be warmed by gentle approach of kisses, hugs and caresses, so that the male could flow into the female. If man's nature required woman's nature and man and woman wished to give and receive, to achieve fusion in joy, then the warmth could be induced by poetic prayer.

I had similar overflow of feelings before the Konarak carvings which are in more heroic proportions. There the invocation by the prince's patron, of the refulgence sun as the cue for passion, had led him the sponsor to order a splendid temple on a gigantic symbolic chariot flying towards heaven. The Gayatri hymn of the Vedas was sung to the great life-giver, the Sun God, who sustained the Universe. Phallic energy and the rays of Surya had been conceived in Vedic tradition as the source of energy.

The temple was to be the lived space, the physical dwelling of men and women, where the longing for the "other" could be consecrated on a poetical—spiritual analogy, which was made to show the ideal lovers viable in symbolic images carved into the magnificent architecture.

The worship places of love thus ensured that men and women need not go lustfully to desecrate woman, but flow to the heart's centre with vibrations of love.

I saw around me how the schism begun by the old sage Manu, by denegrating woman as "temptress" "to be shunned" had prevailed on the folk. The teaching of the Puranas had reduced the value of the warm living human body to the cold sphere of abnegation of desire. The result of the supressions had been to degrade woman and reduce her to the status of a slave of man's lust, the bearer of children, born of rape and torture, most of them, mistakes.

I dare to think of the live body-soul of men and women freed from constraints that lead to masturbation by the young, to frequent assualts on women by the repressed, the blud-

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

geoning of their bodies, the stifiling of their desires and the trickling of tears on their cheeks after being had and left to bear the consequences of lust.

In the charm of lyrical figures, in the temples dedicated to Shiva, then, I saw males and females in the fluent ease of the *lavanya* or grace of love, on the good earth, in ecstacies of union.

I was reminded of the German philosopher, Nietczehe, who had praised the worship of nymphs, dancing in the temples of Dionysius in high ecstacy.

In the twenties, after my own euphoria, on reading poetry in praise of the elements, by Walt Whitman, Emerson and Thoreau, I had been dazzled by the frank addiction of the novelist D.H.Lawrence to open awareness of sex against the sin-conscious intelligentsia. All these inspired me to go deeper into our own celebrations of human love. Lawrence had been preceded in Britain by Havelock Ellis and Bertrand Russel, who had both written of the conquest of happiness beyond the self destroying constrictions of puritan taboos and emancipated a whole post-Victorian generation to accept free love without the shame-faced taboos of those who had inherited Victorian hypocricy.

At the same time, I had revolted against the instant moment approach as in the *No Orchid's for Miss Blandish* of James Hadley Chase, the sadism of woman-beating in Soho and the Hollywood and Denham seductions.

I naturally turned to the Tantriks who sought to deepen, through conscious acts of retrospection, as in poetic action, for mutual orgasm, in warm embraces of man and woman, away from lust.

I recalled the poet William Wordsworth's celebration of Love in his poem *The Prelude*: Tis Thine:

> "The Prime and vital principles is thine
> In the recesses of thy nature."

And in the invocation of the "Sun's Hot Eye" of the poet by which men and women were to extend the soul's horizon from human centres was to be the fulfilment of desire.

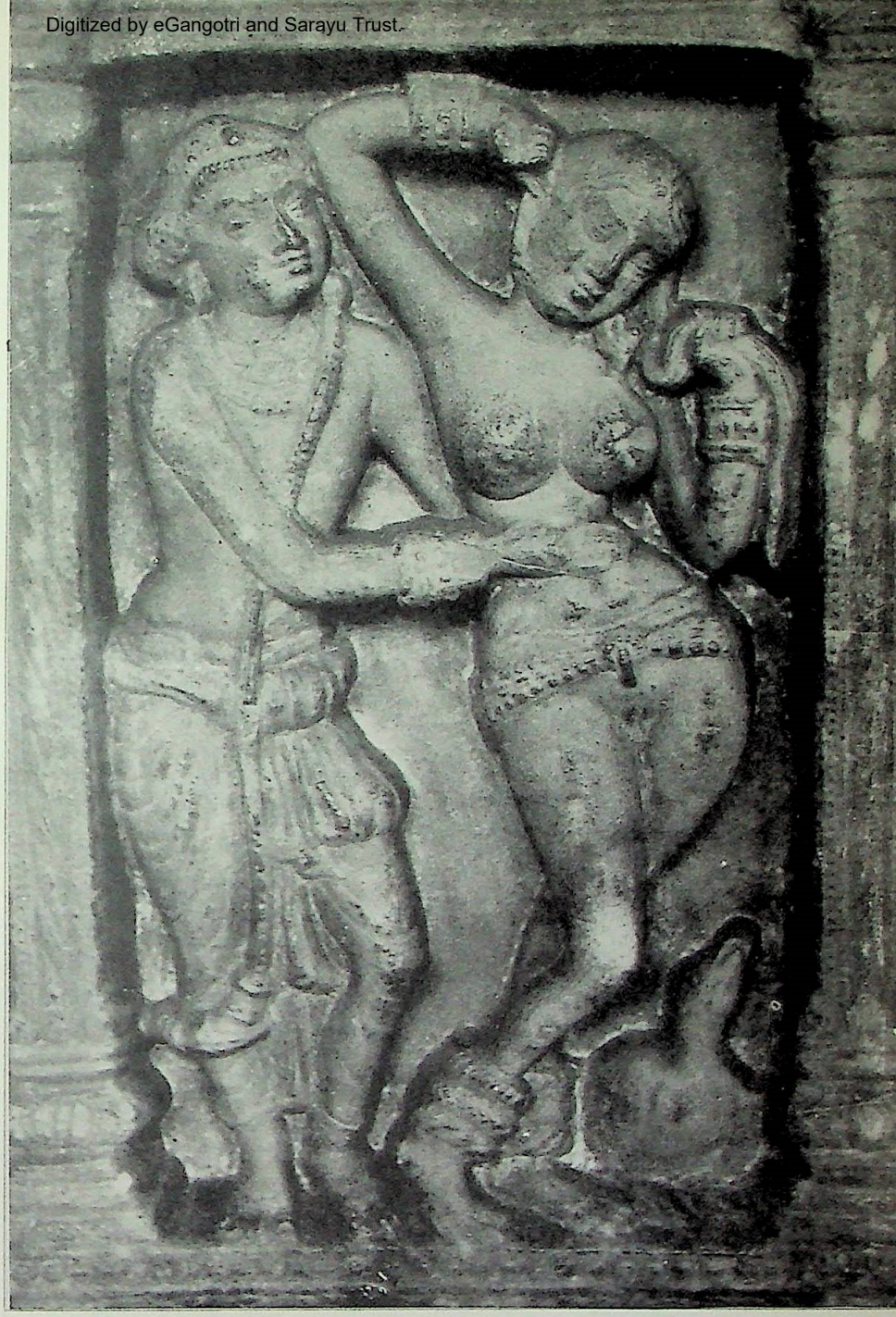
So I decided to research in the forbidden traditions of Kama Yoga, which had inspired the various shrines, to help to recover t he self possession by the young of their body soul, perchance they may recapture the body's rapture from the splendid carvings, dedicated to Shiva-Shakti, and resurrect the flames lit by the craftsmen with heavenly skill.

Hence this book of some notes on the philosophical basis of "erotic" art and images of love.

Mulk Raj Anand

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

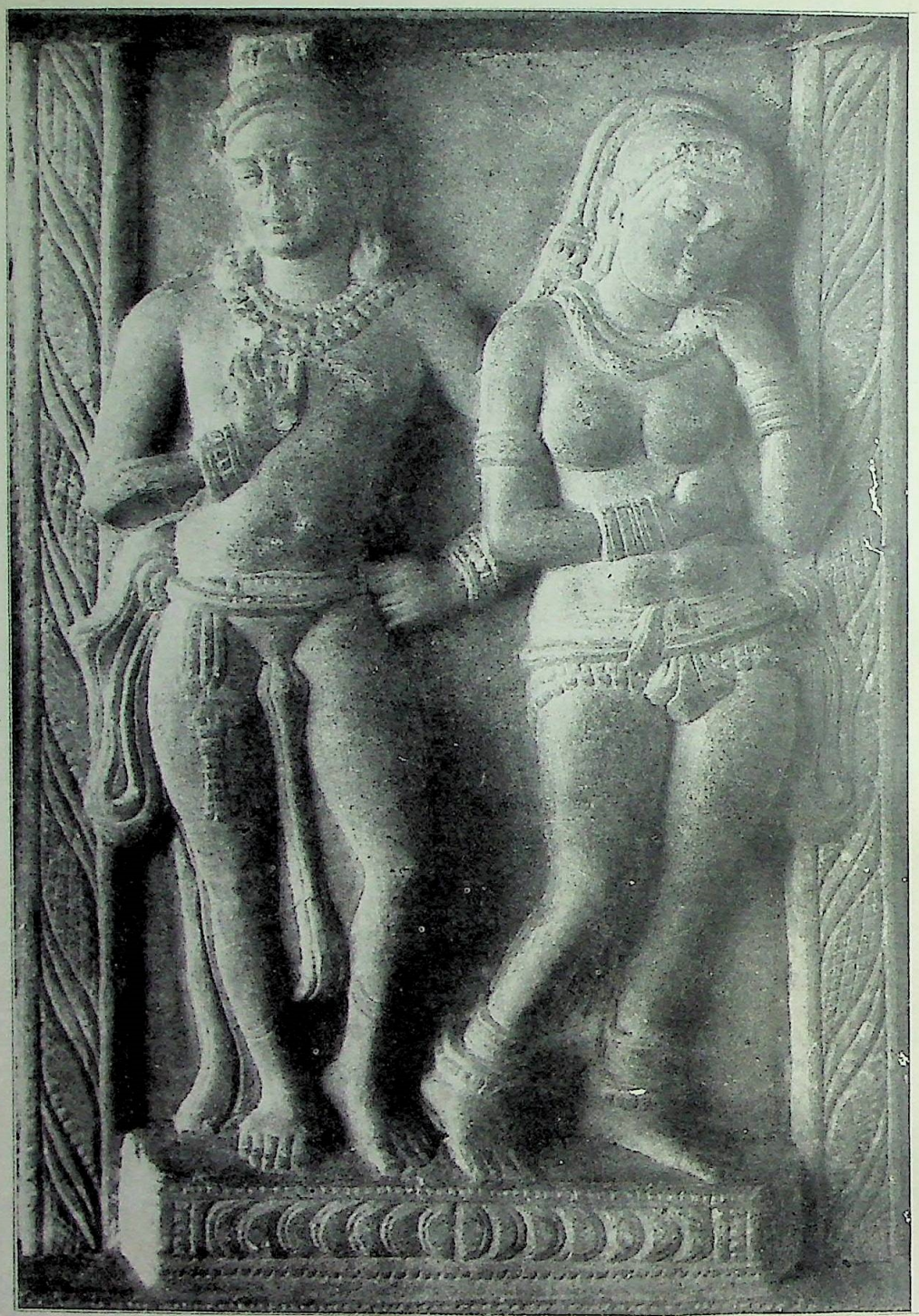


In Mathura under the Kushan Chinese-Hun-Indian Dynasty, The Buddhist stupa evoke female forms, moon breasted, heavy hipped and swan waisted—acme of desire images.

Pagan impulses of the followers of the Buddha were not restrained by his abnegation of desire. In the Barhut stupa appear lovely females exalted to tree spirits naked and unashamed.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



By the 2nd-3rd century A.D. the Buddhist tradition of Barhut, Sanchi and Mathura had travelled to Nagarjunakonda, where the folk festivals were interwoven in their festive dance play and love making on the stupas.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

1

Denial of hunger and love, the natural human passions

Of the primary passions of mankind, hunger and love, the smug and comfortable middle classes of the Victorian era turned away from the latter even more than from the former. Ofcourse, the awakening of the people to the horrors and iniquities of the first rapacious phase of the industrial revolution in England, as well as the undercurrents of revolts in the, colonies and possessions of the British Empire, had forced the dominant sections to concede to the poor and the disinherited a certain amount of social reform. But the prejudice against love, particularly in its sexual form, was more deeply rooted in Christian puritanism, being based on the doctrine of Original Sin and expiation of guilt, to gear the labour to work for the production of goods.

While many of the romantic intelligentsia protested violently, in verse and prose, against hypocrisy and called for frank acceptance of sex and a return to the more wholesome pagan outlook of an earlier 'Merrie England', the cohorts of prudery did not begin to disperse against the attack of the rebels, until the researches of anthropologists, Morgan, Fraser and Tyler, and the sexologists, Van der Velde, Bloch and Havelock Ellis, began to reveal the existence of other fairly harmonious civilisations among the so called the "savage" peoples of the East which admitted love of man and woman as expression of nature's integral urge without shame, in the spirit of holiness.

The barbarities perpetrated by the opposing forces in the first world war further stimulated the more sensitive among the intelligentsia to questionings and quite a few of them began to seek honesty and vitality in the passions of the relatively unspoiled "dark" peoples with their "darker" gods. And the creative writers and popularisers of the twenties finally shocked the hypocrites into facing "the facts of life" and the tenderness of sex as the basis of human relations!

Meanwhile, whatever the implications of the dingdong battle between "puritans" and "romantics" in the "home" countries, the damage had been done in the suburbs of the Empire.

Said the Italian anthropologist, Paola Mantegazza : "Our Western civilisation approaches woman like an animal on heat, with hardly more than an animal's comprehension of anatomy and human refinements. And yet the West has, up to very recently, considered its ignorant approach as natural! The tragic consequences of brashness and ignorance, which are rape of woman are now being realised..."

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Christian missionary denigration of our culture, and the impact of Lord Macaulay's impositions of false sense of shame in our literates

In our own land, the Christian missionaries, who came with the proverbial Bible in hand to "civilise the heathen", had already led the attack against the "obscene" "native" cultures. They succeeded, to some extent, in corroding the basic beliefs of the indigenous religions, which had survived from the past, in decay, often merely as uninspired Brahminical ritualistic *pujapath*, devoid of intellectual content and in suppresive of emotional life which had been frankly accepted as integral to human growth and happiness. The foreign rulers, recruited clerks and inferior officers mostly from among the puritanical lower middle section, brought their own ignorant and arrogant complacency about Western Christian civilisation to bear on the ways of life of the people they ruled, barring a few forward and courageous spirits who tried to get to know the heathen. And their collaborators from among the "natives", frequently educated in the colonial schools and colleges, as well as probationers in the universities "at home", became thoroughly anglicised, adopting the alien pruderies as the hallmark of culture, thus remaining ignorant of the ancient heritage of paganism of their own lands which was aware of the rhythms of the sun, the moon, the earth, the air on humans. And a century of Europeanisation created, as Lord Macaulay had wished, an educated middle class, in our country, to whom Greece and Rome were more important than Magadha and Mahabalipuram. And generations of our people, among them the most intelligent, became "paralysed bodies, paralysed minds and paralysed souls", to quote Ananda Coomaraswamy, so that the *obiter dicta* of most educated Indians about the carvings in Khajuraho or the Sun Temple of Konarak has not been very different from that of the most obtuse of the erstwhile rulers. In fact, while some of the most valiant British archaeologists struggled hard to preserve the ancient monuments, their Indian successors remained for a long time completely apathetic, and willingly lent their ears to puritan die-hards who declared their wish to replace the temples of Khajuraho, Konarak, Puri and Bhuvaneshwar, with new modern temples! And while the younger intelligentsia of the West turned in admiration to our monuments, the false shame of our new bourgeois paraded itself in the most abject apologies about the decadence of our mediaeval shrines and prohibited even husbands and wives to hold hands on the sea-shore, or to kiss in a public place or even in a film. To be sure, the mental Imperialism of the West seemed to have succeeded in corrupting and perverting the outlook of the conquered, already degraded, more than the physical empire now overthrown.

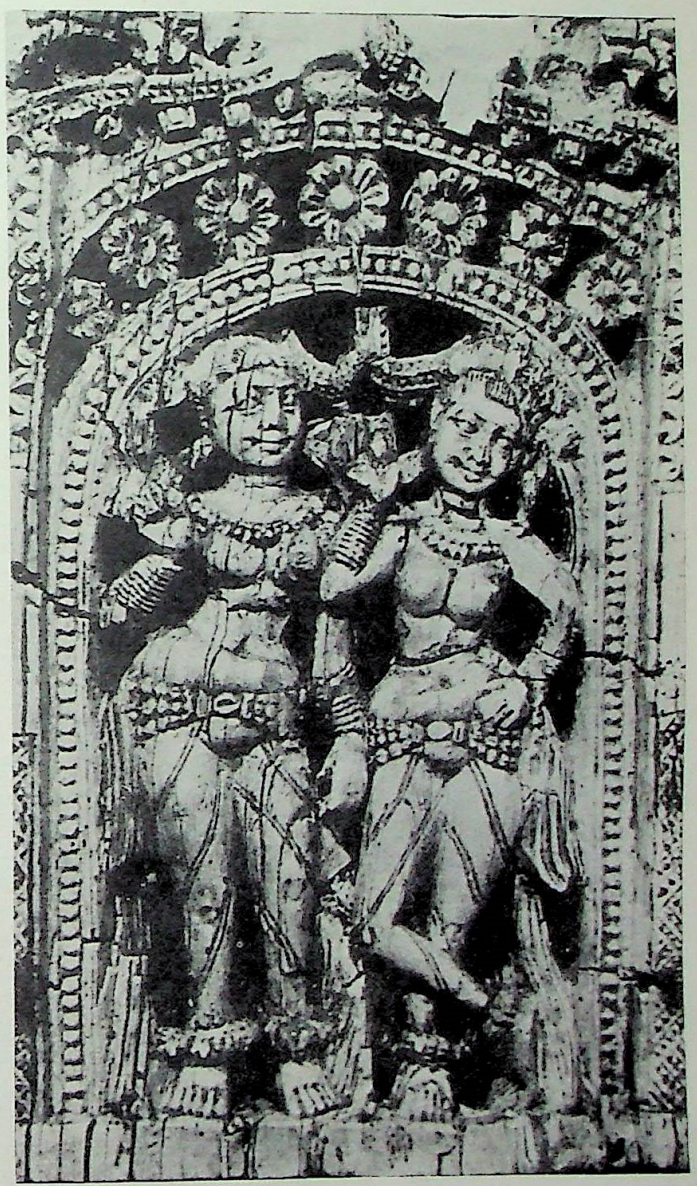
The necessity of rediscovery of postulates behind Hindu erotic art

It is necessary, therefore, to rediscover the fundamental postulates behind Hindu "erotic" art, so that the sexual principles which inform some of the most vital sculptures of Bhuvaneshwar, Khajuraho, Konarak, Puri and elsewhere are made explicit, and the return is made towards an internal criticism, in terms of the intentions of the builders, rather than in terms of dictums of biased westerners, whether they are Christian mis-

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.
sionaries, or their conscious and unconscious disciples among the foreign puritans and the ignoramuses among the intelligentsia in our own midst.

There are obvious difficulties of documentation of the vast refulgence of Indian art, which still handicaps the understanding of various aspects of its ethos. So what is offered here are only some stray notes on the philosophical basis of the art expression of the love impulse. This may be valuable if only because they may help to dispel the furtiveness which characterises all talk of Indian "erotic" art and to lift the taboos on the exhibition of artworks expressing the theme of sex, frankly, and in the full sunlight of understanding, of something which lies at "the roots of human life itself".



In Gandhara, where Indian and Greek streams of feeling fused with each other, we find ivory carvings on decorative panels, probably part of a palace of some ruler of the 2nd century B.C. in Begram, near Kabul. The exquisitely carved couple of female dancers shows love of sensuousness in early Indo-Greek art.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

2

The "erotic" sculptures in the mediaeval temples which were highlighted in brilliant photos by Raymond Burnier, Sunil Janah and Charles Fabri, did not spring up suddenly through the perversity of some local Rajas who wished to titillate their personal appetites by the contemplation of several permutations and combinations of male and female. As everyone knows, who has even the vaguest acquaintance with the metaphysical principles of Indian culture, the polarity of the male and female has been shown in much of our creative art, because even before the compilation of his *Kama Sutra* in the 4th century A.D., by the sage Vatsyayana, the poetry of relationship of man and woman in love had been shown in the Vedic poem *Urvashi Pauravas.*

According to S.C. Dey of the Archaeological department, Buhvaneshwar, the earliest instance of an amorous couple is to be found on a Jain pillar in the Lucknow Museum, of 2nd century B.C. It is not quite certain whether this anticipates the carvings of amorous couples at Taxila, Mathura and Karla, but the extent remains are presumably part of a continuous tradition of the representation of couples in sexual poses, as recreation of lovers in idyllic surroundings which began with the beginning of the sculpture in India and continued until the British put a legal ban on secular "obscene" art.

Early examples of sex expressionism in Indian art

When the Maurya, Gandhara, Kushan and Gupta traditions travelled down to west Deccan, down south, and to the Bay of Bengal in the east, before the Ist century of the Christian era, the Maithuna embrace appears and re-appears.

And in the mediaeval revival it is resuscitated with even greater vigour from Ellora to Khajuraho, downwards to Bhuvaneshwar, Konarak and Puri and the south Indian Saivite temples, as well as Belur and Halebeid. The whole of Indian folk art is replete with sexual motifs. And, from the metal and wood images of Bengal to the wood carvings of the ceremonial Rathas, or carriages of gods, attached to each temple, there is the most intricate and tender (or sometimes crudely primitivist) embellishment of the theme of human love, unparalleled perhaps in all world art. Undoubtedly, however, the sexual carvings and reliefs in the temples of Khajuraho, Bhuvaneshwar, Konarak and Puri have invited greater attention from the prudes, because of the greater profusion of the Maithuna couples and the boldness and elemental honesty of the sculptures, as well as the formal qualities of the carvings. No one, except the prudes, who comes face to face with the magnificent carvings in Khajuraho and Konarak can turn away, from sheer obsessional prejudice. We feel com-

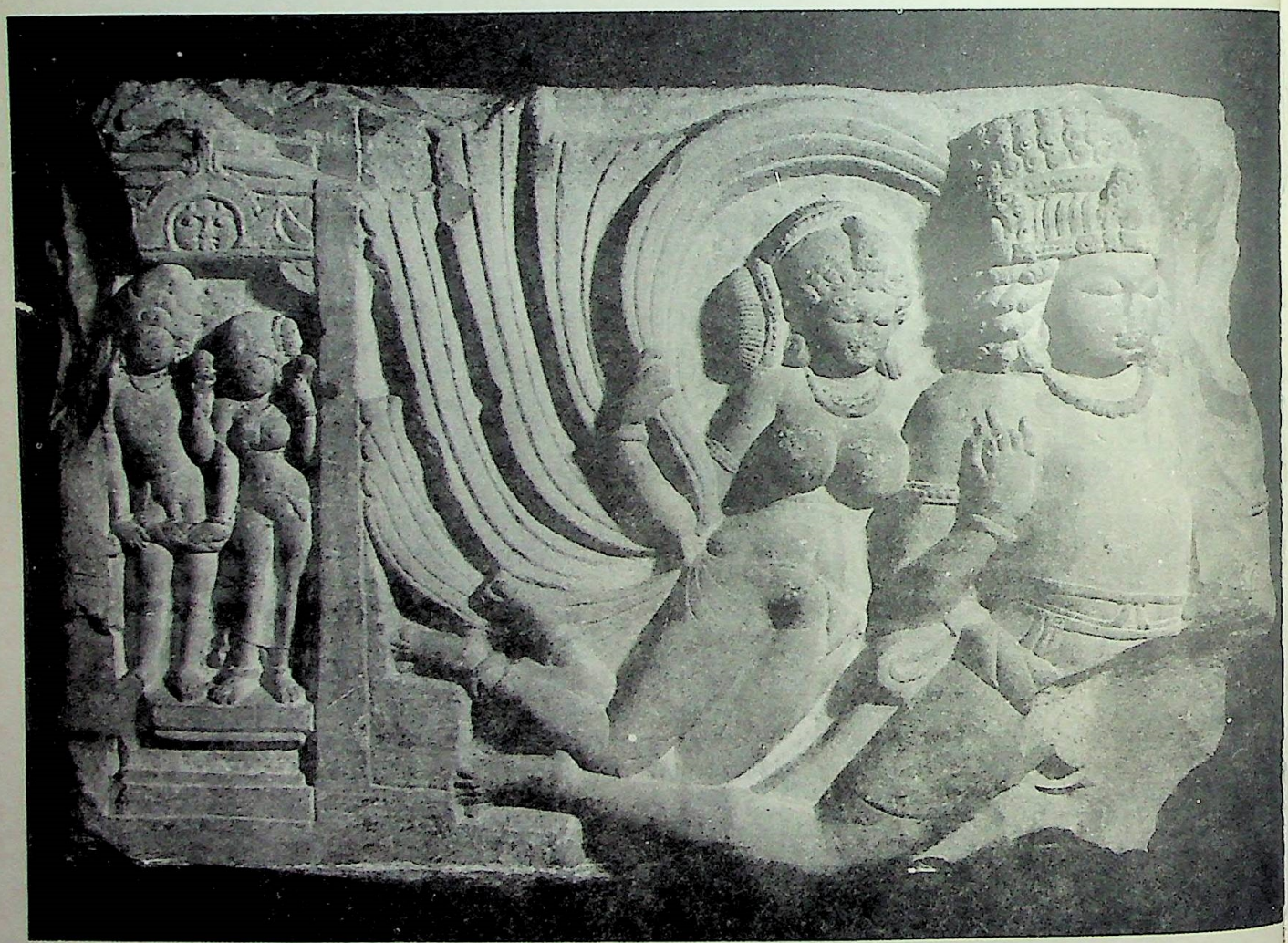
CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

pelled to linger and appreciate the skill of the craftsmen, attempting the seemingly most impossible postures, not only frontal reliefs but in the corners and niches of the temples where it would be difficult to carve in the ordinary way. And if, as in Khajuraho, there become visible, within the precincts of a group of temples, creative architecture and sculpture enough to compare with the products of the whole European renaissance, the fascinated visitor is merely struck dumb in the vain attempt to understand how such miraculous achievements were at all possible!

Ideals of carvers of Indian temples

What, then, were the ideals of the carvers of the ancient and mediaeval temples? How did they live? And what were the emotions and passions which moved them in those remote times?



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

3

Admittedly, we Indians have displayed a very poor sense of history, and there are few contemporary records which might reproduce for us the atmosphere of those bygone times. And yet to the extent to which the past has been uncovered, through the translations of Sanskrit and Pali texts, and the discovery of images of all kinds, certain hints and references have become available, which suggest that the eras of the earliest creative arts in India, though stamped with the genius of man, as is, indeed, on all the best world art, were entirely different in their temper from the abstract complexes of the present day industrial age.

Poetic images of nature Gods and Goddesses

In those days, there was a certain high condition, built on the fabric of rural, agrarian living, where men's mouths uttered hymns and incantations to the seasons and poetical proverbs about the face of nature's beneficent or dread potencies, even as we now speak in prose. As the earliest known invaders, the Aryans, came down into the Indus and Gangetic plains, they evolved a pantheon on the basis of their response to Prithvi the earth Goddess, Usha the dawn, Varuna the sky, Surya the Sun. The fire which had always been the mainstay of their nomadic life was exalted to the status of the god Agni : the terrible storms that raged in the dense dark forests, and on the mountains, were symbolised as the god Rudra: thunder and rain became Indra. The benevolence of all nature was worshipped as Brahma the original creator. And as they began to occupy the most fecund wheatlands by subduing the original neolithic inhabitants of the country, the Dravidians, who were addicted to the earth gods, subdued the fervours and the magical rites of the indigenous tribes. There were Yakshas and Yakshis, tree spirits, among the conquered people; there were Nagas and Naginis, snake spirits; there were demons; there were fauns and dryads and nymphs and fairies. For, in the eyelids of the neolithic Dravidian peoples everything had a soul. And this soul was in the process of transmigration from one incarnation to another, according to the law of Karma, through which good deeds and bad deeds assured a higher or lower rebirth until the attainment of Moksha, release from the trammels of existence. Although the subjugated societies were characterised as snub nosed Dasyus by the Aryans and were later reduced to a lower status in the fourfold hierarchy of caste, imposed by the dominant groups, the invaders adopted almost all the native beliefs, took wives from among them, since they themselves had brought few women, and a great synthesis began of the various stocks which resulted in the elaboration of a more complex pantheon of myths, fables, wise sayings and geometric designs of outer space, time and the astrological interactions of the stars in their courses, to put into the inner space.

Fusion of racial stocks

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Already fifteen centuries before Christ, in the *Rig Veda*, the Aryans had sung tenderly about the relations between man and woman. And the following poem suggests a very sensitive and lyrical conception of human desire among the opposite sexes, springing from an intense realisation of love and beauty and exalted dignity of woman :

"I am a poet, Dad's leech,
my mother grinds corn on the quern;
as cows go following, one on one,
we all seek wealth in different ways.
The horse pulls a light-laden cart,
gay hosts attract the laugh and jest;
man longs for woman, natural as the parched
frog longing for the rains."

Early Vedic love poem

In the *Rig Veda*, there is the hauntingly poignant poem of the heart-rendering separation of Urvashi and Pauravas. Urvashi is a nymph from heaven come down to earth, with whom Pauravas falls in love. They live together until she is with child by her lover, when she announces that she must go back to heaven.

The poet has seized, even in the infancy of man's evolution, the predicament of lovers, who are going to part after passionate loving :

Pauravas, the mortal lover, speaks :

"You who were my wife,
loving and kind, what transformation now
changes your beauty?
What mortal strife?
And what dread purpose marks your
lovely brow?
O break your purpose! Let me
sing your praise,
Lest dead and fruitless be our
distant days."

But, pitiless, the goddess replied:

"Of what use now your songs?
No more you see:
The passionate lover or the willing bride.
As the dawn vanishes so vanished she.
The bride is but air, and mortal is the groom
Return poor mortal to your mortal doom".

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

He spoke again, defiance in his eyes :

"Angry the heart when destiny draws near.
Look, as an arrow of the quarry flies,
So come I to you, clear of any fear,
Without such courage, shall the heart not shine?
The lamb's voice, crying, is no voice of mine.
'You spoke of dawn,' he said, 'and the dawn each day
Renews her beauty, after the loving night
In some dark bridal chamber laid away.
Embraced by darkness, rising still more bright
Such is the power of loving, to renew
The dawn for ever: so my love for you."
"Ah love, the goddess said, you did
And take me wholly, as a living fire.
Shy was my body, but my face
turned from you, and I yielded to your desire.
Though I a goddess, you were king of all
My body's realm, and held me in your thrall."

After saying this, however, Urvashi is still determined to leave Pauravas.

He submits :

"The sacrifice, my goddess, receive
this mortal flesh, O you who fill the air.
I take my destiny and do not grieve.
Blessings be yours for all our sacred years.
And yet, turn back, my heart is hot with fear".

The late Dr. D.D. Kosambi believed that this poem of the pangs of parting is a ritual act, a sequel to an "Aryan marriage, symbol of some actual sacrifice of a man by his wife upon the birth of a son."

Was the poem allegorical?

Ofcourse, there have been some other interpreters, like Professor Max Muller, who thought that this hymn is an allegory of the "dawn fleeing before the sun."

Metaphors inspired by human passion

But the metaphors are obviously inspired by human passion, "arrow to the quarry flees", "power of loving", "living fire", that, seemingly suggest the story of fulfilled love on earth, later lost, obviously idealised. In those days the uplifting of everything to the realm of the gods was the only way in which the incoming Aryans could assert their superiority over the cultured dark Dravidian folk. And it is likely that the departure of Urvashi may reflect the actual sacrifice current in the patriarchal Aryan society of that time.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Still it is the early poet's exaltation of love that, in its curves of longing for the moment, which comes through in the poem of loving in the terrestrial spring time of our land, when "the arrow pierces the quarry!" One can imagine those lovers in some forest lying on grasses by wild flowers, with the stars nodding assent to the murmurs of soft words, the sweet taste of the brine in their mouths accented by the warm perfume of the queen of the night, frightened of a possible snake crawling through the bushes and yet absorved in the stirrings of desire.

Brahminical abstractionism

Soon, however, we find the love symbolism being strained by the Brahmins who recited the hymns.

For instance, we see efforts to abstract from human love its passional fervour and love being raised to the height of Ananda, divine bliss, which outgrows the senses as love itself!

It is likely that, as the priests wished to make every naive impulse sacred, they began, in their role as custodians of the secrets of the mysterious beyond, to make myths to overawe the worshippers. They began to light sacrificial fires to invoke the god Agni, to connect the people with the gods. And they began to sacrifice human nature itself, to the heavenly powers. The mortal Pauravas had already been diminished and Uravashi exalted, by being taken out of her human beauty and made an idol, who could not have any connection with her beloved, the man Pauravas.

And yet, the inner urge of passion of the love play, from the intimate warm feelings, remains. And romance becomes myth. And the human heartache is itself elevated into the aspiration to ultimate Love.

This interchange of desire, myth and ritualistic symbolism, appears in many other Vedic hymns. For instance, in the probings about the universe, in the *Hymn of creation*, we notice that native questionings about the beginning are transformed into symbolic utterance of the mystery beyond human ken.

In the light of the vague doctrine of desire, as the cause of the world, then, the philosophy of Kama, wish, desire, carnal expression, lust, love and affection, was growing up in the Vedic period, through the urgings of human desire but being abstracted by the Brahmins into abstract spirituality, to draw people to the worship of the ultimate mystery against their access to the mystery of love as longing for the lure of woman.

Popular acceptance of love in Vedic households

But the charms of love are frequently mentioned in the *Atharva Veda*, the last of the four holy books, probably sung almost contemporaneously with the earlier Vedas, the *Rig, Sama* and *Yajur*, but compiled later. The philosophical attitude is simple, recommending love-life, in the family life, as the necessary condition of humanity at a certain stage. A harmonious family is that in which both the husband and wife are happy and dedicated to the procreation of numerous children, preferably sons

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

and more sons, for sons are indispensable to the maintenance of an unbroken line, for the performance of the funeral rites over the parent's dead bodies, for the worship of the spirits of dead ancestors and, importantly, to cultivate the soil. There are nearly forty poems among the five hundred and thirty six hymns, prayers, incantations and charms in the *Atharva Veda* (trans. C.R. Lanman, Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. VII and VIII, Cambridge, Mass. 1905) devoted to the subject of Kama. Let us mention a few of these to give some idea of the popular acceptance of human love in the Vedic households.

"For successful child-birth (II). Imprecation of spinsterhood on a woman (14) : A love spell, with a sweet herb (34) : To secure a woman's love (72) : To get a husband for a woman (81) : Against a rival wife, magic with a plant (117) : For fecundity (127) : To command a woman's love (130) : For recovery of virility, with a plant (149) : The incantation of the lover entering the girl's house by night to put the household to sleep (151): For successful conception (265) : Two charms, to win a woman's love (287) : For birth of sons (288) : Against premature birth (293) : Against jealousy (293) : For winning a spouse (325) : For matrimonial happiness (339) : For successful pregnancy, with an armlet (341) : To obtain a wife (342) : To win affection (347) : For virile power (354) : To win a woman (355) : Two charms to win a woman's love (380) : For pregnancy (401) : Against a rival woman (411) : Husband and wife to one another (411) : The wife to the husband (412) : To win and fix a man's love, with a plant (412) : To cure jealousy (416) : To destroy one's virile power (465) : Against a woman rival, with a plant (467) : To guard a pregnant woman from demons (493) : Magic stanzas for marriage ceremonies (704-753) To Kama (521) : Of desire (985)."

From this compilation it would seem that husbands and wives had their difficulties much as we have these tensions now. And the remedies offered in the *Atharva Veda* are not unlike those which have been offered in all subsequent ages. Only then the consultant on marital affairs was the priest or the quack. And now we have the psychoanalyst and the family doctor.

Awareness of man-woman relations at various levels

The surprising thing is the awareness, so early, of the whole problem of man-woman relationship, and its recognition as a fact of life as against the beating about the "gooseberry" bush of our age of taboos, resulting in marriage as rape and love as: "Shall we do it before dinner or after?" And, apart from the herbs, plants, philtres and amulets, the dictums laid down about suggestion and persuasion, the elementary eugenics, as well as the emotional and mental hygiene of attainment, all couched in magical formulas no doubt, offer understanding of human desire as against its condemnation as sin.

And the whole subject is treated from the sense of the mystery of life, which sets the tone for all subsequent literature on the subject.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

In the sixth part of the *Chandogya Upanishad*, the Brahmin Svetaketu, one of the first redactors of literature on sex, is spoken of as receiving the key to all knowledge in the form of the Vedic *Maha-Vakya* "great formula" *Tat Tvam Asi*. "That art thou". This Brahmin was a master of sacred love and brought the highest sanctions to bear on the art of human desire.

Of course, in the process of Brahminical holism the amours were subordinated to ritual utterances. Sacred love was exalted above human love. The sadistic delight of the priests in reducing human love to sin in order to exalt love of God enabled them to punish human beings in the name of the deity. In the growingly orthodox patriarchal Aryan society, the tendency of the upper hierarchies, made woman into a temptress. The priests were jealous that men preferred to seek the accessible mystery of love by cohabiting with woman than meditate on "nothing in the hope that they may be something". *Tat Tvam Asi* "That art thou!" was easier to say to the beloved woman than to emptiness.

There is a myth of the mother goddess Saranyu, the consort of Indra. The God of thunder and lightning sends Saranyu down to earth to capture some cowherds who have stolen his cows. She descends on the cave where the dacoits are hiding. They receive her warmly and give her fermented milk to drink, which goes to her head, till she falls asleep. When she returns to heaven next morning, Indra is angry and kicks her. Saranyu vomits the milk she has drunk and this becomes the milky way.

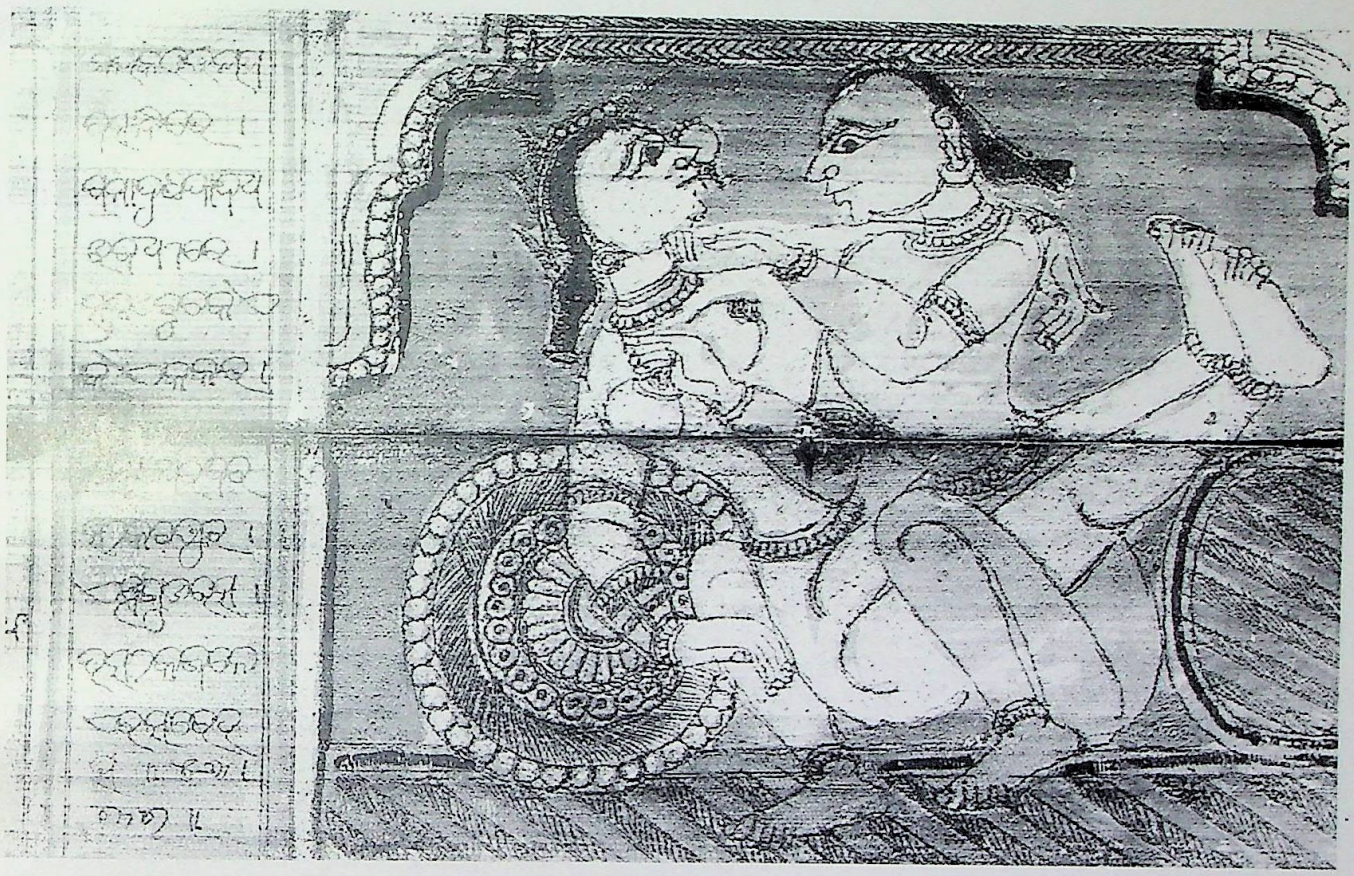
There are some esoteric meanings in this myth.

First of all, it shows that the status of the Mother Goddess, who was Supreme before the Aryans infiltrated into the Indus valley, has been reduced to that of a wife, of whose straying the husband is jealous. She is the spouse of the Supreme God. She is punished for her forgetfulness by her Lord and Master, Indra, the father-god, as Saranyu, is his slave consort.

Clearly, love in its free couplings and expressive of human desire was being more and more repressed, towards the middle of the Vedic age. Conquest of land required pure heroes. There was little time for dalliances.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

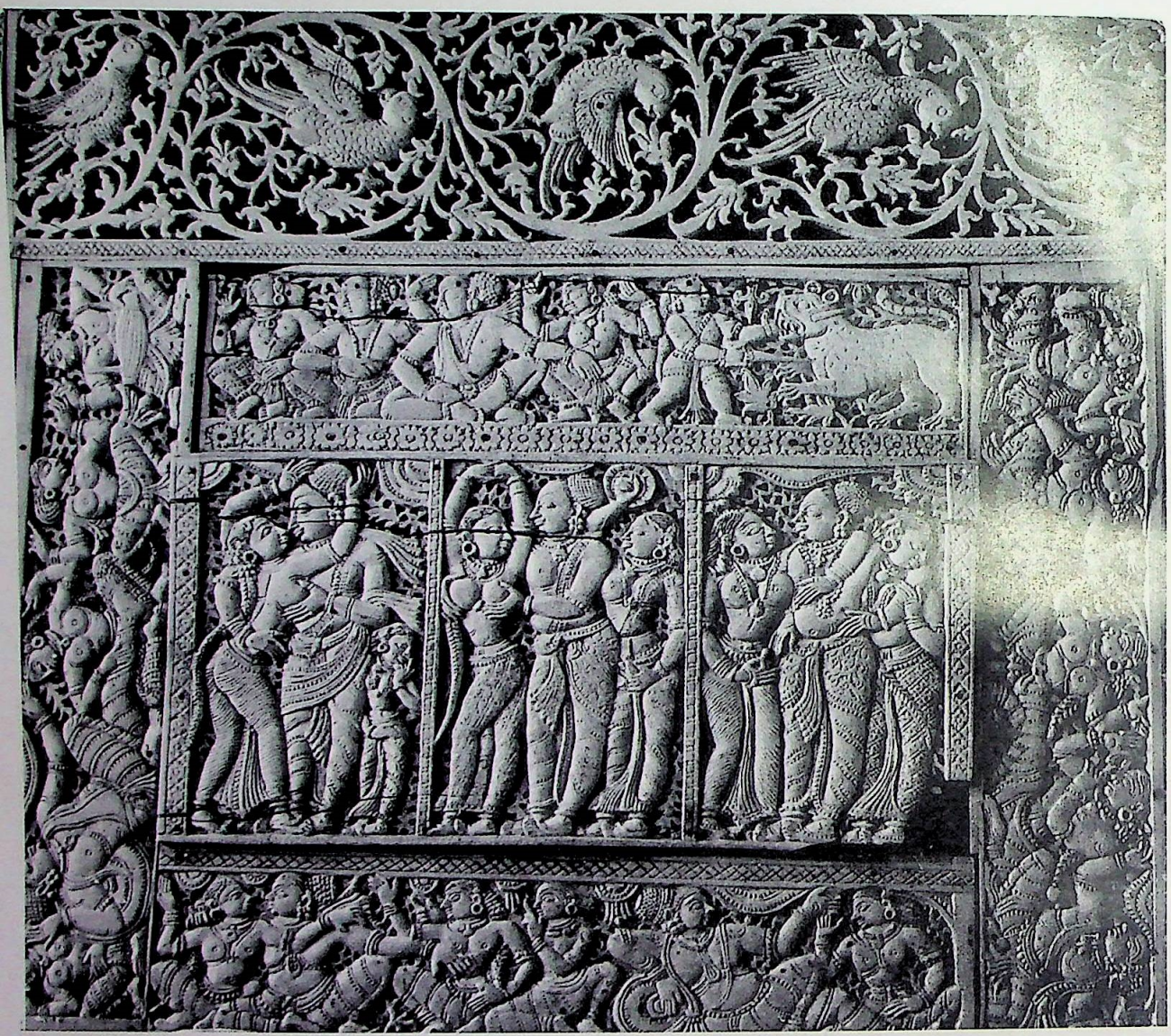
Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



The influence of Kama Sutra of Vatsyayan spread over the whole of India in the princely courts. Love of man and woman thus entered the decorative arts. In Orissa, the folk brought the sensuous grace of free love into paintings and sculptures.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

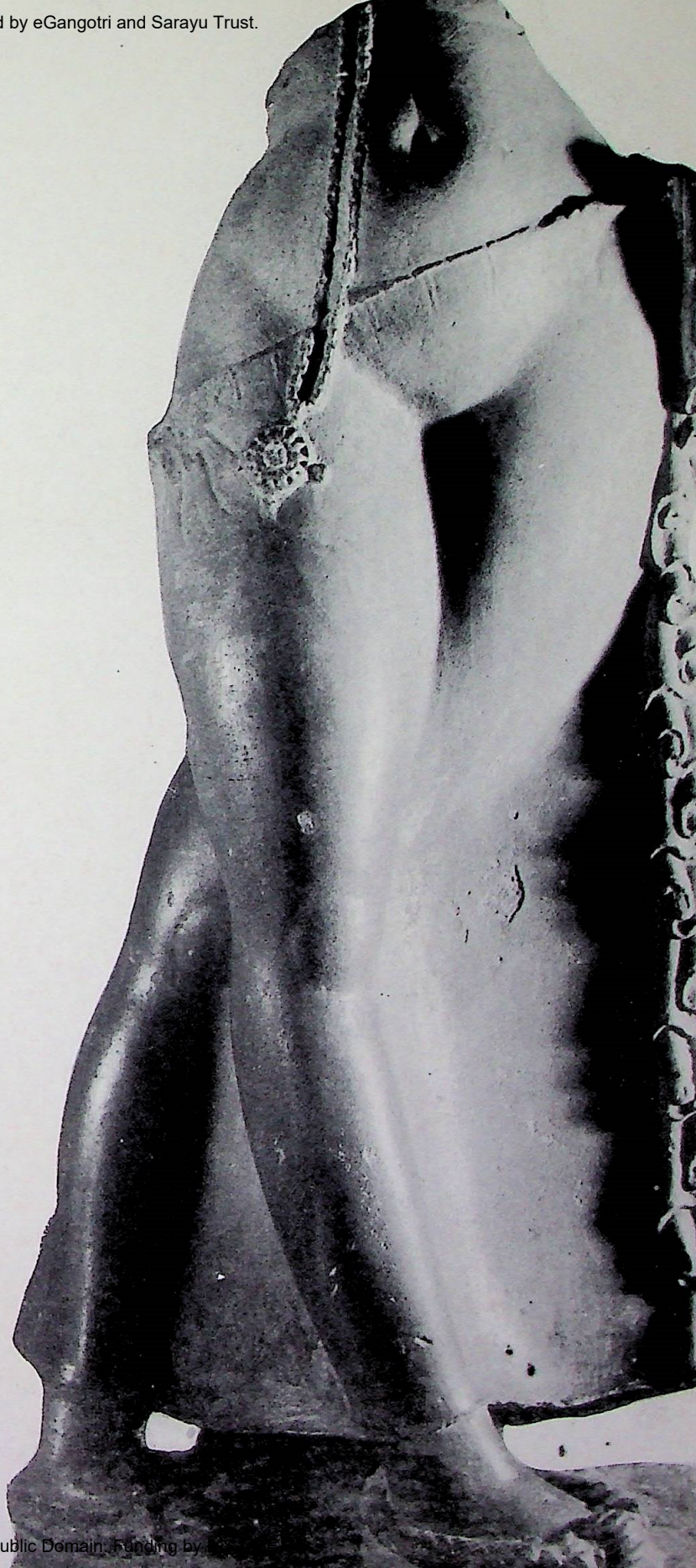
Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



In South India, decorative arts like ivory carving were replete with scenes of pleasure as on the ivory box from Srinangam temple.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



The lyrical flow of the female body was poetised in sculpture redolent of loving caresses for the beauty of woman's from.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

The intertwining naga couple was a theme shared by Orissa and South Indian sculptures to show the natural union of male and female.

CC-0. Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

4

During the thousand years or so of the Aryan and Dravidian synthesis, a rich intricate fabric of social relations was being built up, as substratum of life on the lush lands of the fertile plains of Bharat. The little village "Republics" were the units of cellular organisation, autonomous and self absorbed in husbandary, in which no one owned land, but everyone had certain rights in it, to till it or to live on it, the tiller giving grain in return for certain services, to the potter, the weaver, the locksmith, the school teacher, etc. Even the local Raja or the Maharaja in the capital did not own land as private property but had the right to collect revenue in kind from the peasantry in lieu of the protection he offered against invaders with his soldiery, or for keeping dikes, dams, canals and tracks in good repair for the bullock carts, camels and horses to move on.

Love in the epics

In the personal histories, or the novels, of that time, the two epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, which narrate the legendary stories of the Aryan conquest and settlement in India, we have glimpses of the social and human conflicts of that age and we see the evolution of the moral laws of this early civilisation. Body man is exalted in the *Ramayana*. Body, soul is idolised as the man cultural, woman seems a vehicle of man's desire. Dharma, or universal love is clearly laid down later in an appendix to the epic *Mahabharata*, which is the *Bhagavad Gita*. The beauty and devotion of woman is the dominating theme of these narratives. Draupadi, Savitri, Sita, and a host of other females emerge as highly individualised characters, though tending to be reduced to a subordinate position. The daily life of these women, their toilets, their blandishments, their emotional urges, all are narrated in intricate detail and with such charm as to indicate the existence of an emergent civilisation in which woman, once honoured as Mother Goddess, is being reduced to a subservient position as procreator of sons and more sons, subject to the will of patriarchs. Until at the end of the epic period we find the sage Manu denigrating her as desire personified, not to be trusted. Although the metaphysical postulates of the Vedas and Upanishads conduce to happiness in love, from the end of the Vedic period woman seems to become slave of man, a domestic drudge, and vehicle for procreation.

In actual fact the free marriage, called the Gandharva, was sometimes practised by men of the upper orders, especially by kings, more often by the tribal folk.

Thus all was not lost.

The Dasyus, who were condemned by the caste order to remain outside

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

the order, had many amorous deities, sanctifying love impulses as totems of fertility. As they were considered beyond the pale, their loves were also thought profane.

But one of their heroes, Krishna, a dark handsome cowherd youth, seems to have captured the hearts of not only the maidens of his village, in the forests of Brindaban, but fascinated the new young amongst the Aryans.

By his abduction of Radha, the wife of a Brahmin priest, and by wooing her from the heart urges of tenderness, after all the blandishments of love quarrels, he and his beloved Radha and the Gopinies seem to have expressed, through the irrepressible freedom of impulse, all the gamut of human feelings as between man and woman.

Krishna and Radha

The stories of the loves of Krishna and Radha resemble the love stories which had become current in other parts of the world like Greece, in the loves of Daphnis and Chloe. As Mr. Norman Penzer has referred to the swan-maiden type of story: "A story tells of the hero coming by chance on a number of girls bathing, or he may see a flock of birds who turn into girls. For some reason or another, he steals their clothes or plumages (in many cases only that of one), and by so doing obtains one of them for his wife." There is a similar story about Krishna stealing the clothes of the girls bathing in the Jumna, leaving them naked, and merrily playing the flute seated on the branch of a tree, while the girls beg him to give them their clothes back. The love play of Krishna with Radha, and the village maids, retained enough human feeling to attract the folk, whose longings in the midst of dreary existence, were for a modicum of happiness in dance and song and sensuous desires, against the sadistic taboos, mutilations and mortifications enjoined by the priestcraft. They knew that human love ended in death, but why not escape from the punishment of holy terrors by free love, making illicit connection itself into a sacred rite to be performed to the tune of Krishna's flute?

They had gazed helplessly at the Death-God Yama's mace invoked by the Brahmins. From their fears arose the abounding desire for love making as in the best of lovers Krishna. And the hero-God's Gandharva marriage with Radha became a model to the more daring young princes. The Gandharva morality continued right into the mediaeval period, because of the sanctions given to it by the poets of the classical renaissance. For instance, Kalidas glorified the tale of Sakuntala, taken from the *Mahabharata*, in which the hero, King Dushyantha, marries the heroine, Sakuntala, in the hermitage of her foster father, according to Gandharva rite. This rite only entailed a declaration by the man to the woman, or the woman to the man, "I love you", and they forthwith accepted each other in marriage and exercised their conjugal rights. There was no priest or witness of the union and no gods were invoked. In fact, Bharata, their son, was born of the Gandharva marriage of Dushyanta and Sakuntala.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

In the pastoral village societies of those times, when the monotony of day followed by night, in the eye of eternity, the only heightening was through the ecstasy of dance and song and love. On full moon nights, and on the various festivals of gathering harvests, to celebrate birth and marriage, the drum beats brought whole communities together in the wild abandon of dance.

The very first movements of males in one line of five dancing towards the opposite line of five females, has continued until today in most tribal societies, imitating the tenative sexual approach, the mating of animals and birds, in free movement. As the breasts of woman were traditionally uncovered like the male torsos, the near nakedness of the bodies stimulated desire. Liquor was drunk freely by both men and women, from the time of the Aryan infiltration, a custom which may have been revived by the Greeks who settled in India after Alexander's incursion, though Soma, the ritual drink of the Aryan priests had already sanctioned intoxication on holy days.

Deva Dasis The upper hierarchies of priests kept in their temples, Devadasis, slaves of the gods, who were trained to interpret the worship of the gods through a highly evolved, intricate and subtle gesture language, with prancing feet, and the repeated vibrations of hands and bodies to the tune of orchestra of drums, cymbals and string instruments.

Already in the centuries before Christ, the worship of several gods was deepened through ritual dances, taught by the Guru to young girls from childhood onwards. As the Supreme God was *Ananda*, Bliss, ecstasies of all kinds were sanctioned, as aspirations towards possible *Yoga* or union with God. Though the movements were highly formalised, the themes of the loves of the gods, the longing of human beings for the Supreme, the loveplay of the gods in heaven, retained the sensuous inspiration of the body, inspite of the symbolisation through abstraction of human impulses by the priestcraft and the puritan injunctions of the sage Manu.

Krishna Lila The Krishna lila enacted in both temples and village squares, retained the intimacy of the love play between the hero-god and his consort Radha and the maids, in dances, in north, south, east and west. The vitalities of the folk deeply affected the subtlised court dances through this love theme. And as the princes often wished to cover their own ardours by having enacted the loves of Krishna, the vigour of the free movements of the village dances affected the dances in noble houses, as also the pictorial and the plastic arts.

It is likely that pagan practices were common among the lower castes, who had retained the fantasies of the Dravidian civilisation against the patriarchal taboos of the Aryans. And in so far as the culture of the suppressed people appealed to the Kshatriya kings and sages, they seem

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

to have accepted Gandharva rites more easily than the other members of the Hindu order.

So the holiness of the ritual, which emerges from all priestly words also reveals shadows. For, side by side with the subtle doctrines resulting from pure reason there are the extant penetrating imaginative analyses of emotions. At the same time men of the sub-castes are being reduced to low conditions, feeding on the roots and harbouring deep resentments against the upper caste orders, but appeasing their longings in compensatory pleasures of songs and dances of love.

But, undoubtedly, the chief impression is of a series of qualitatively profound philosophies or existence embodied in the aphorisms and proverbs of sages, who lived in retirement in caves and forest groves, and whose thoughts came to be collected in the so called forest books.

One and the Many

The essence of these speculations was the inauguration of a supra-sensual kingdom of belief in the One Absolute God, Brahman, who splits himself through desire into the Many and to whom the Unit, the One God, all multiple elements wish to return.

There is no doubt that this central cosmic outlook which had emerged from the Vedic and Dravidian synthesis and from the forest books, held sway over the whole of subsequent Indian thought by its exalted conception of a Supreme Deity, who has the highest attribute, his complete incomprehensibility to the human and intellect, who is unattainable except through mystical intuition. And this culture built on the heavenly Father, the embodiment of all that is in the universe, the being and the becoming, the unity of all life, the ultimate symbol of creation, this patriarchal philosophy has held sway for centuries. The rational mind cannot really describe the One superreality. And men can only say : 'It is not this—not that!'

And yet for the folk the parallelism of human impulse to procreate offers a clue to His creation of the cosmos:

"He desired :
I am One
Let me be many, that creation may be."

This parable of human desire for progeny is pressed further. The Supreme Being impregnates his cosort nature through His longing for the opposite : and from the pull or attraction between the two principles emnates all life. The spirit *(Atman)* "alone is inner aspect of person" *(Purush)*. This person in the beginning "was such as are a man and a woman in close embrace." He desired a second. He caused that spiritual self of his to become flesh. Thus came into being husband and wife... He had inter-

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

course with her. Thence were human beings engendered. In the same way he and she, assuming other human forms, begot their like in the animal types.

Says Krishna, the incarnation of the Supreme Deity, in the *Bhagavad Gita :*

"I am the Love that procreates."

Again :

Krishna in Bhagavad Gita

"The matrix of all forms, born from all wombs in Nature, *Prakriti*—father, giver of seed."

The male and female forms thus become the manifestation of duality, desired by the Supreme God, the earthly symbols of manyness and procreation:

"The Yoni and the Lingam symbolise the creation of the world. Their union represents Karma (action)!' *VATULA SHUDDHA*"

In the *Bridhanayaka Upanishad*, in one Sutra says the sage Yajanvalkya to his spouse Maitreya : "The husband does not love the wife for the wife's sake, (he) loves the wife for the Self in her". So human love is seen as a symbol of the great love of the Supreme God. But in some Sutras below the joy of physical union reflects the limitless Joy of the Deity in creation:

"In the embrace of his beloved a man forgets the whole world-everything both within and without: in the very same way, he who embraces the self knows neither within nor without".

BRIDHANAYAKA UPANISHAD

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Folk listened to the Mantras of priests but lived the instinctive life

The bulk of the people, living in small hamlets in the heart of nature, did invite the priests on the occasion of birth, marriage and death, and heard the high sounding Sanskrit Mantras, which resounded in their ears for days, in fear and praise of the gods. But India's culture for ages was oral culture. And though the holy men wanted the folk to aspire to the higher Self, the peasants made up their own myths, varied by the salt on the tongue, in order to sanctify the instinctive life. The familiar folk theory did inherit the spark as the cause of life from the Brahmins, made familiar through the hymn of creation. But, struck by the fluid movements of fish, they thought life first manifested itself in gliding movement of fish and then the phallus. The power of the wild bear tantalised them, so that seemed to them the next avatar in creation. Then came the hardy peasant. The god-king Rama, the perfect man, was the crown of evolution. But woman, the mother was all, without whom there could be no life. She was to them always the Great Mother the source of life itself. The crude insight had seized upon the single cell formed by the fertilization of the ovum through the coming of the sperm. As the rhythm of life seen through vibrations in man and rabbit and sheep and pig and chick and tortoise and salamander and fish seemed all alike, they seized upon the energy in all these as the beginnings of the sentient life flow.

Naming each thing and fixing each symbol is but the most inadequate way of expressing the nature of the functions of the Supreme God. People paid lip service to symbols but loved their wives as Shiva loved Parvati. And sometimes like, God, they loved a woman other than the spouse as Shiva loved Ganga.

So He who enjoys greatest joy, Anand, Bliss incarnate, is beyond reach, except to the most selfless seeker, remained the dictum of the thinker.

The priestcraft exalted Ananda or abstract joy, and enjoined that human existence should be a form of sacrifice, to obtain attached joy and women should accept inorder to emancipate themselves from birth and rebirth, through worship and dedication, to merge with the Supreme Bliss. Our human happiness they said gives but a glimpse of the boundless joy in store for us, in so far as we seek to recognise our true self in the intense moment.

The folk philosophies, called the Tantras which ran parallel to Brahminism, with characteristic genius for elaborating human sanctions of the people, accepted sexual pleasure, exalted as the joy nearest to the

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

realisation of God. So but everything in life becomes divine, every action becomes, when properly understood, the concentrated expression of a universal law, the inner curve of the tabooed connection, the image of a more intimate approach to the Supreme, the starting point for the attempt to pierce the dreamy veil of the shadows to be consecreated in sex union, to touch joy. Thus the odour and sweat of sex was poetised, and no shame attached to it:

Praise of passion in Upanishads

> "The woman is the fire, her womb the fuel, the invitation to man the smoke. The door is the flame, the entering the amber, pleasure the spark. In this fire the gods form the offering. From this offering springs forth the child."
>
> (CHANDOGYA UPANISHAD 5,8, 1-2)

The mystic syllable AUM, then, became the symbolic equivalent of the erotic image even for the sage in the forest.

"The union of the sexes is equivalent to the mystic syllable AUM, when the two sexes come together, each fulfils the desire of the other."

Even as on one side, the highest tide of Upanishadic thought reached out to ideals which defied human understanding, there was elaboration of ritual to afford access to the laity by the Tantriks, which sidetracked the injunctions of Brahminical teachings.

The poets deified the subtleties of the sages. There is a poem of the early mediaeval period by the Buddhist poet Dharmakirtim which mocks at Panini, the Grammarian of the century:

> "Glory be to Panini Grammarian of antiquity who says "the heart" is neuter. Thinking of this world I sent her my heart for mysterious conjugation I do not think that Panini Grammarian of antiquity knew such an act."

And even though the obedience to ritualized life was accepted as a skelton, the folk who lived, as slaves of the gods, in convention—bound societies, furtively groped around for such magical sensations as may bring them nearer to the human aspiration to ecstasy. They may have failed to realise their secret incohate urges, but they looked to man and woman union as a short-cut to happiness. The sages may seek Brahman. Yajnvalkya may live as a Brahmacharya soulmate with his wife, but the folk wanted to see the gleaming face of woman in dance, after taking liquor, and embrace her in the dark.

Against the eternal renouncers, there grew up, then, generation after generation, many secret cults of the Tantra, which were mostly magical, and aspired to love union.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Play function of sex as the act for procreation

The primitivist hunch that the birth of the child through the creative act, compels all creation, made the anarchist lay philosophers of the post-Vedic world postulate certain forms of play, primarily sex play, as both the beginning and end of the aspiration towards the ecstasy of union, in the act of procreation.

There were many *Maths* or centres of the Tantriks all over the land. Some of them were patronised by princes and noblemen and heroes. In those times when death in birth was possible, postponement of happiness through exile from life in prayer, seemed a hypocritical injunction if the priest himself cohabited with a Devadasi or a temple girl, slave of God.

Specially in the period of family life *(grhasta)*, allowed even by orthodoxy, wisdom lay in the acceptance of the senses. Expression of sex impulse, after preparation through festival of eating good things, drinking liquor and dancing were indulged in as sacraments before sex. There was promiscuity. Only, tenderness had to break before interpenetration. The fact that sex was the source of life was linked with achieving high destiny by Tantriks.

The fluid of sexual essence was controlled in its flow, even through celibacy, to avoid premature emission through the discipline of *Hatha Yoga*. The energy at the base of the spine could be aroused by control of breathing. The body could be made the medium of the soul, as the physical life was not considered lower and the spiritual life higher. Suppression of sex was regarded as unnatural and thwarting the organic growth of the person. By certain exercises, the essence could be made to flow though neural pathways into the spinal canal and then upward to the brain. The bloodstream which carries nerve food for organic transformation, emerges from reproductive organs and can be made to flow towards the Kundalini at the base of the spine and release the serpent power which itself releases the highest creative energies.

Thus below the sacred doctrines of the highest consciousness of Brahman, there were psychophysical stirrings to touch the *Shakti*, or female power, to light up the horrid darkness of nights in the jungles. The Tantriks were more numerous than the high priests. They were to prevail under the surface in the early centuries in the jungles near the villages.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

6

Upon this scene entered a man of sensibility, Gautama the Buddha who was struck by the jugglery of the Hindu priestcraft with words and images, as was Mahavira, the austere, naked Jina, his near contemporary. And he saw the outcastes rotting at the far end of the villages, the sick, the toiling and the dead. He held debates with the Brahmins and often confounded them in argument about God as Joy. But, unable to affect them, he turned away from the religion of his forefathers.

Gautama Buddha's path

The fundamental fact of the earthly universe is Dukha, pain, he said. And there is no way to escape from suffering, to which man is condemned by the cycle of birth and rebirth, except to shun false desire, and to practise the fourfold path of right speech, right conduct, right thoughts, right deeds.

> "All our tendencies of character, sensations, perceptions and predispositions, are the offspring of consciousness, dominated by consciousness, and made up of consciousness. If a man speaks or acts with sullied consciousness, then suffering follows him, even as the wheel of the wagon follows the hoofs of the bullock..."

The ultimate release is not through the realisation of God, but liberation in Nirvana, the reservoir of nothingness, from which there is no return to the earthly state, after the transmigrations of the soul, through the performance of good or bad *Karma*.

Buddha uplifts. the rejected and the jungle folk

And this dream of rising to the pure empyrean, above the rejection of upper castes of the lower, and the jungle folk, inspired hundreds and thousands of people of the suppressed to follow the enlightened one, a high caste Kshatriya prince who had left home to seek the truth and preach it to suffering humanity.

And a great liberation began from the lower depths in the country. The bells tolled in the temples of the Hindus, but the people flocked to the caves of the Buddhists for release from the shackles of the voliferous logic of illogic of the Brahmins. A new concept of holiness spread over the land:

> "I call not a man a Brahmin, because he is born of a Brahmin mother, such as one, if affluent, may be addressed as 'Sir . But he who is without worldly belongings and is free from attachment, him I call a Brahmin."
>
> DHAMMAPADA, 14

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

The villages that flowed like abscesses into each other heard the healing message. And, from the odours of the hutments came crowds of sick and old and suffering to the monks. Women who had been reduced in status by the priests, who were jealous of the lure of the female to men, asked to be allowed to enter the Buddha's Sangha order and they were allowed. Morning and evening the populace heard the drums of the monasteries announce the prayer hour when the monks sang: "Oh Mani Padmai!" May the lotuses awake! Not all the injunctions of the Brahmins could blow out the lamp that Gautama had lit.

For a thousand years or more, the struggle between the men of the new gospel, of the undogmatic, weak and the downtrodden, against the men of the established order, raged in all parts of India. The mighty Emperors, Ashoka Maurya, accepted the new faith after he had waged a murderous war against the folk in Kalinga. And he sent out missionaries to many lands to preach the new words of tenderness.

The inner conflict of ideas was, however, fraught with strange consequences! Whereas the new pure teaching had rid people from the old faith of the Hindus with its many putrid accretions, the more subtle psychology of Tantrik rituals in which the folk had participated entered Buddhism. And in a century or so after the death of Gautama the negative features of the gospel, the shunning of desire, was humanised by the urges of the populace by the reversion to early paganism.

Speaking the words of the blessed one, and discoursing all over the land, the monks who had inherited the practice of Yoga, from Gautama, who had accepted this from the Hindus, they also compromised with the forest people of the land, conceding their natural life of song and dance and lovemaking, themselves remaining puritan while they moved from monastery to monastery venturing into Central Asia and onto China.

The new iconography

Thus there came to be deified three created realms in Buddhist iconography, through which beings pass to be reborn: *Kama-loka*, the world of desires; *Rupa-loka*, the world of pure forms, beyond desires; and *A-rupa-loka*, the world without forms. And the example of the Buddha was cited as that of the sage who broke the power of desire, even as he had routed the forces of death, in order to rise into the timeless infinite of Nirvana.

Not for everyone, however, was such triumph possible. For, face to face with the excruciating paradoxes of life, those who were more alive to pain, found it all difficult to bear. The laity were thus not prevented from devoting themselves to the pursuit of the bitter-sweet delusions.

Concessions to human impulses

Strangely enough, the negative doctrine of the Buddha, which had enjoined rooting out of all desire, conceded human impulses except to

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

the monks. And the Buddha who had asked that no images be made of him, came to be worshipped, first through certain symbols, like stupa burial mounds, over his tooth, or some relic later through portrait sculptures and paintings, more numerous than the icons of any other human being who has been deified except Jesus Christ.

Om Mani Padmai

The saint by the very nature of his illuminations seems more than human. And, because of the light he is supposed to enshrine, he becomes sacred to the masses.

In India, of the centuries after the Buddha's death, while the upper orders of priests and princes lived in exalted worlds, there were infinite number of outcastes on the outskirts of every hamlet, and the much despised aborginals in the labyrinthine depths of the forests, who were seeking a faith which considered them equal of the upper peoples, as human. They could never understand the high flown rhetoric of the Brahmins in Sanskrit, but recognised their faults from the homely wisdom of the don'ts in the sayings of the Buddha, preached to them in the popular speech Prakrit. And, as they were called by beat of drum to the monastries of festivals on full moon nights, they went as pilgrims to communal gatherings to be one with others, to hear words of compassion, but came back to their dim hunches, sensuous expression and elemental life in the jungles. At home the talk of transcendence seemd unreal. So they whispered *Om Mani Padmai* 'May the lotuses awake', in the dark, to dispel their fears, but joined hands to the totems of tree spirits, demons, Bodhisattvas or potential Buddhas and Taras, the latter being the deified females of the iconography of the new faith. The difference between the Hindus and the Buddhists was that while the Brahmins denied light to the outcastes, the enlightened one had accepted the outcastes and preached good human relations, through right conduct, right words and right acts and allied himself with the people's despair against the pain of life. Thus, within the orbits of feudal and religious servitudes, the instinct for freedom of erstwhile slaves, lower peoples and untouchables, found reprieve from casteist contempt, in mixing together in festivals.

In order to keep their followers, even through tenuous connection with-them the monks of the Buddhist Sangha multiplied the happy occasions on which the lay followers could come to the monastries. And they conceded to them all their traditional festivals of the changing seasons. In fact, on the railings and gateways, of the stupas at Barhut, Sanchi, Mathura, Amravati and Nagarjunakonda, vibrant images of everyday life were carved in joyous reliefs. These showed sensuous forms of desirable Yakshis, tree spirits with slender waists and heavy hips, as ideal types of females, crowded scenes of festive laity and human couples in embrace, or dancing and in vital participation with each other. Ofcourse, there were reminders of suffering and inevitable death. But the intense moments of life in the here and the now, in the mortal life appear, the

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

hope of Nirvana having been pospostponed to the next incarnation. The vibrant urges of life had won through against extinction. And love between the male and female was accepted in the rhythmic life as happiness itself, because the memory of the love of the Great Mother who gives birth to life had not faded from folk unconscious.

Similar transformations from consciousness of transcedence to acceptance of the enjoyment of the fruits of the earth, were seen among the followers of Mahavira, contemporary of the enlightened one, who had been more extreme than Gautama in his preaching of renunciation as the only way out of the misery of life, perpetuated by the Brahmanical caste order through the belief in God as Anand, joy, and implicit in the very idea of transitoriness of existence.

Similar relaxation of life impulses in Jainism

Only the most devoted monks of the Jain faith could give up the world and wander naked, practising the most painful asceticisms. Like Mahavira, who could not put an end to the miseries of the world, the Munis took on the pain of others, as though by this *reversal* they could relieve the ordeal of man and woman. They conceded to the laity the philosophy that there is some truth implicit in every other faith. So they allowed the lay followers to live the mundane life. The giving-up was postponed, or remained as a guilty conscience. Compensatory relief was sought in the religiosity of almsgiving. Often those who professed tenderness for others of the Jina and the other *Tirthankaras* or saints, sucked the blood of the poor as moneylenders.

And, as in the Buddhist monastries, so in Jain holy places, the residual feelings for togetherness in suffering were realised in festivals, when the acknowledged saints preached the gospel of renouncing lust, false pride and lies. The furtive lovings of the folk were excused as punishment in this incarnation.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Jain Taboos

The Jain faith seems to have attracted many more people during the times of mass cruelty. In fact much creative art, also tabooed by Mahavira, emerged during the early mediaeval and mediaeval periods in paintings of the legends of the Jima and other Munis. And, paradoxically, the art which was to preach asceticism by showing the example of Mahavira, aware of extinction, brought happiness of colours, making disillusionment with life into the expression of longing for lovely women shown worshipping ascetics. The animal spirits of the folk brought the retreat from the awareness of ultimate suffering into the hedonism of self enjoyment.

Some of the most sensuous paintings in the Jain tradition are in the *Vasant Vilasa*, a manuscript of the celebrations of spring. In these pictures the male and female bodies appear as the privileged locations of joy. Desire as the inner core of movement, is the atmosphere of the season of flowers.

Vasant vilasa

Ofcourse, the bulk of the Jain art is austere and rigid, because pleasure is not the source of the chisel in making a symbolic portrait of Mahavira or a Tirthankara, because sadness is the quintessence of the Jain faith. And the artisans, though often Hindu, accepted the ethos of the ascetics who were for lapsing. Only in sculptures like that of Bahubali, the expression of the prince turned saint is intensely poignant, because on the way to inevitable death, this hero was more torn than others, in the decisive moment of accepting withdrawal from the things he had loved.

The predicament of the Jains has been that the flesh does not perish until the moment of death. But it decomposes also in life, unless it is sustained, as in the *Vasant Vilasa* by the vibrations of living human connection.

Always, however, keeping in mind the transitorianess of phenomena, the worshippers were innured to a certain kind of rejection of emotion of the Hindu faith to which they were originally born. Also, belonging to the rejected castes before the conversion, they had inherited the fatalism of those condemned to live. Thus most of the followers brought hearts stiffened against human passion. Only the bulk of the Jain communities decided to live in the world and abjured the aspiration to become saints like Mahavira, or even to rise to the heights touched by some of the Munis, naked or clothed, and the nuns of the order, renouncing the world tried to be tender to every insect, worm or germ.

Below the surface, the inner core of human feeling asserted itself against Mahavira's existentialism. In their hearts, the followers saw that life and

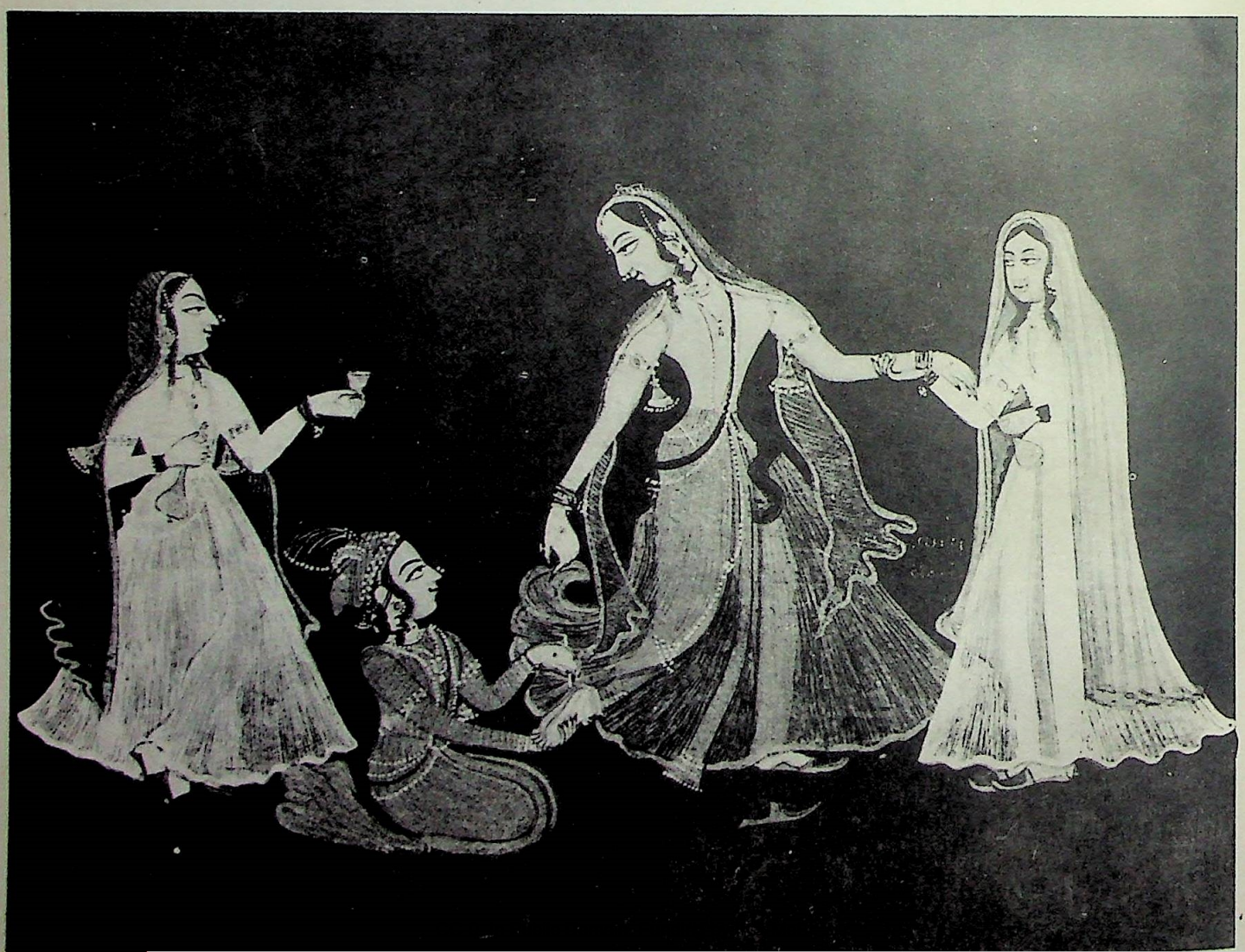
CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

death are not always opposed to fact. The rennuciation of the saints could put death against life by a dramatic act of giving up.This decisive moment seldom arrived in the routine life of the householders. So there was a schizophrenia in the consciousness of most Jains. The awareness of the pain of life remained as a sediment in the submind, with the attendant guilts, and it was "business as usual" in the work-a-day world.

The prevailing mood of Jain women was summed up as a poem by one Bopalita, perhaps of the early mediaeval period:

"'All right --
She hasn't said a word.
She's angry --
Hasn't turned her head.
All right --
She hasn't wiped her eyes.
But her husband --
Has taken hope in the fact
That her feet --
They haven't moved an inch."



Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

8

And yet the discipline of Yoga meditation and action was by this time accepted as an ideal both by the Hindus and the Buddhists. Yoga practice beginning with the energising of the body through breathing exercises, to awaken the dorment lotuses of the brain, to illumine consciousness, was designed to deepen interior realisations. So that the extrovert experiences may fall aside and the higher and intense worlds of awakened faculties may be attained. These latter are themselves divided into interior states, emerging from stimulations of the body-soul by stirrings, which become states of awareness symbolised as celestial beings.

Yoga meditation to illumine consciousness

According to the central principle of Yoga, there are distinct differences between different kinds of beings, due to the relative awakening of the subtle centres of the body-soul. Thus each human or animal body is represented by a diagram, *Yantra*, formed by the main centres. The proportions of *Yantras* determine the relative adjustments of the characteristics that go to make a conscious individual. It is possible, by adopting certain definite postures, to change the relative position of the subtle centres and thus evolve a new *Yantra*. And if we can maintain this new relationship of forces in us for some time, the new balance will so affect our perceptions that we may come into touch with the kind of being represented in a new diagram, of Yantra.

Asanas or postures

The postures, or *asanas*, of Yoga are specifically designed to promote this end. And they are roughly of two kinds: the *Padma-asana*, or the lotus seat, the posture for beginning the process of stirring of energies of the Kundalini at base of the spine.

And there are various erotic energies which may be released through sex experience for soul-union. Of these there are eighty four in number, and they are frequently represented in pictorial literature.

Yoga meditation to get over anxieties and pain of the world

The teaching of the ways of meditation through *Yoga-Sutras* was designed to achieve calm by getting rid of the hindrance of *Klesa*, anxieties and pain of the world, caused by *Avidya*, ignorance, *Asmita*, the crude ego, *Rajas*, attachment, *Dvesa*, hatred, *Abhinivesa*, clinging to daily routine of mundane experience. For the inherent perfection of the essential personality was an ideal which had percolated among the people as the highest value, short of the achievement of *Kavalya*, the perfect isolation, of ultimate illumination, exclusiveness and detachment.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

The Tantriks were, however, putting more emphasis on the psycho-biological hunches about evolution of consciousness in their Yoga practices.

After tracing all energy to its source in the *Kundalini* at the base of the spine, some of them prognosticated that conditioned sex union may stimulate the evolutionary process and bring heightened awareness.

The Tantriks cultivated Kama Yoga by stimulating energies of Lingam and Yoni

By the control of *Prana*, or breath, through which the lingam and yoni may be energised, to prolong the pleasure of the union, the breath can vitalise the lovers and illumine the body-soul, making for intense awareness, through Kama-Yoga.

One of the sculptures in Khajuraho which shows man and woman in coitus, is a nearly impossible stance, held through the assistance of companions, suggests that, as in *Hatha Yoga*, or physical exercises, like standing on one's head, the Tantriks had perfected sex poses, to take away the instinctive impetuousness through which most men merely rape women when the sex urge comes, do not care for the woman's feelings, and often leave her dissatisfied, thus inhibiting her in all her sex contact and condemning her to slavery before every violent eruption of lust.

Underneath the Yoga of self realisation, the *Kama Yoga* was being practised in certain centres where the Samkhya Darshana, based on the union of *Purusha* (male) and *Prakriti* (female) had percolated throughout the land before the Gupta 'golden age' of the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

In the late mediaeval period, when the Agra Mughal Kalam had penetrated into the Himalayan and Rajasthan ateliers we find the celebration of loves of Krishna and Radha, as in the Gita Govinda of Jayadeva flowering into exquisite miniatures, in the Phari painting in Kangra and Guler.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

The private albums of princes were replete with conjugal scenes of naked love.

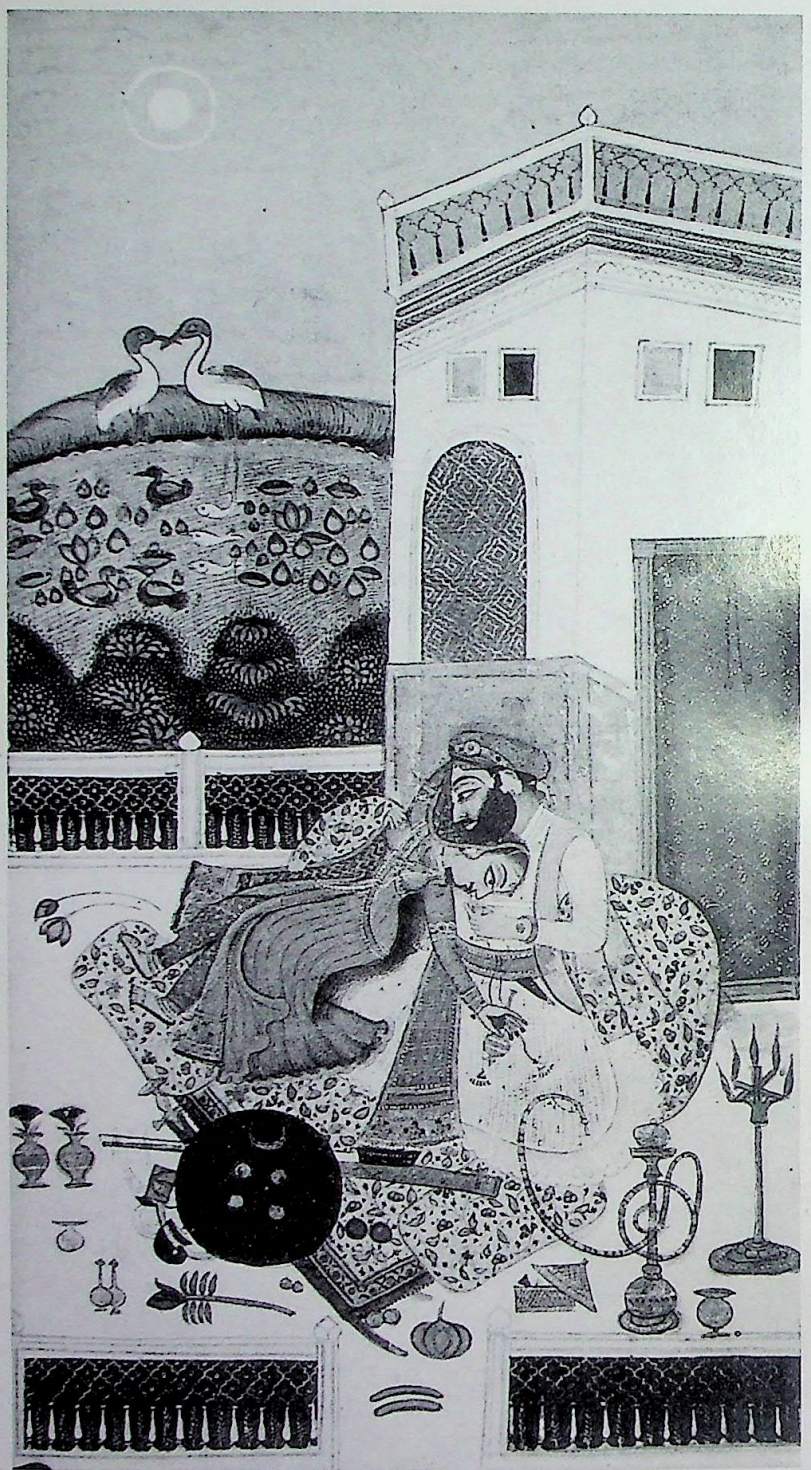
CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

In middle India, the Mughal miniature style adapted itself to Hindu lyrical impulses in the courts of various princes.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



The intimate scenes of love making were frequently part of the albums of the nobility.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

9

Gupta period

If the Gupta period of third-fourth centuries A.D. is called the 'Golden age of India' , it is likely that it is socalled because we find a quality of life experience emerging in the imaginative literature and art of that era beyond the rules for life, accruing from within the Brahmanical order which governed the Hindus, in poetry and pictorial-plastic arts. Against the negations of the Buddhist order, the Brahmins had loosend up to offer God as Bliss Himself. And the poets opened the hearts of men to the beauties of the earth. Specially did Kalidasa celebrate festivals of nature and love in such works as *Ritusamhara, Meghdoot* and the drama *Sakuntala.*

In the epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata,* the causality behind every fiction had been the opposition of *Dharma* to *Adharma,* universal law as attainment of perfect morality against maladjustments.

Valmiki had looked back to hero Rama from his own turbulent time, by exalting the hero God-King in his epic *Ramayana.* Rama is shown as the paragon of virtue, triumphing over the immoral tyrant Ravana. The poet wanted his imaginative flights of fancy to uplift men in his time of the dissolution of faith, through the example of a mythical superman who sustains civilisation.

Vyasa

Vyasa, the compiler of the many myths, fables, and stories in the second great epic, was also writing from within a time when the power urges of the various cheiftains were leading to wars. And he, even more than Valmiki, wished to resurrect, through confrontation of evil, the highest values of the aristocracy, which some of the chieftains were themselves flouting through greed for land and more land and for prevalence through power over rival landlords. His grasp of the tragic realities is complete. And he calls the gods to help the righteous characters like Arjuna, symbolising the metaphysical essences, as God Krishna who comes to help the cursed Pandava heroes against their cousins, the Kurus.

The poet Kalidasa appeared, however, at a time when the sages had been codifying all knowledge of creative arts of happiness of the thousands of years before him, against Buddhist and Jain negativism.

In the court of Ujjain, this poet felt urges for the enjoyment of the fruits of political victory. The Gupta kings had spread their rule all over northern India. They had opened up trade routes northway eastway and westway and to the south. The riches of commerce inspired new generations of towns-folk to the life of the senses. Song, dance, drama, painting, sculpture, love making and the crafts, which could embellish the life of luxury,

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

for the nobles, the generals, the merchant princes and their immediate underlings received tremendous impetus. The contact with the remnants of the Greek settlers in Gandhara, of descendents of Alexander's successor rulers who came to stay in the Gupta capital, of Ujian was vivifying. Their God Bachhus revived the rejected Soma and free love. In their hunting expeditions, the princes, nobles and grandees, met, away from the Brahmin patriarchs, the tribal peoples, who had remained outside the codes, living the free life in the midst of nature. The intellectual discipline of the philosophers, and even the laws of the capital cities, was taken for granted and paganism was preferred.

Kalidasa

The atmosphere of the age of Kalidasa thus gave opportunities for moving away from the moral emphasis of the strict Hindu codes (which remained concurrent), to the release of those sensuous urges, which, though current among the folk, were frowned upon by the Pundits.

The advent of Kalidasa and his contemporaries thus augured the arrival of a man of fresh outlook, who seized upon the fact that categories and codified thought is for orthodox dullards, who find it easy to repeat the words compiled by the old sages, than to create fresh words and images by direct contact with lives of human beings of earth, the birds, animals, flowers and all the phenomena which shows the refulgence of nature in every colour, sound and gesture.

Possessed of a delicate lyrical sensibility, Kalidasa turned away from the dictums laid down by the outwards, in his wanderlust and enthusiasm for the pleasures of life. And he thus wrote hauntingly living lines, in imaginative forms, with their inimitable lights and shades, of human experience, sometimes from old legends but mostly from his own highly sensitive awareness of imperceaptible feelings of centuries of concealed urges, and inner events of which the nobility had been ignorant. For the first time in centuries, a lush human spirit recreated his own free feelings, thought his own thoughts, and put his passions in new metaphore, that move us when the definitions leave us cold.

There had been before him the systematisation of the Rasas, or flavours of poetry, dance and drama.

Bharata Muni and his successors had confirmed the nine moods of Bhavas as Navras. There were : *Sringara* or the love mood; *hasa* or laughter; *shoka* or sadness; *bhaya* or fear; *Krodha* or anger; *jujupsa* or disgust; *vismava* or wonder; and *utsaha* or fortitude; and *Shama* or calm.

Navrasas or the moods

The *Sringara* rasa is the mood of the longing for the beloved : It manifests itself in two ways : As *Vipralambha* or pining of the lovers for each other; and *Sambhoga*, flowing of the lovers into each other in the ecstasy of the coital embrace. The *Vipralambha* and *Sambhoga* were further ana-

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

lysed by the commentators and annotsators, who were addicted to schemising in the dreary days of languishing in Maths, hoping for court patronage.

Love of Sakuntala and Dushyanta

Kalidasa obviously knew the compendiums, specially the various Kama Sutras which had come down. But he wrote ornaments of Love, instead of a treatise on the Purva-Raja woman to show how she acts in *Nili* (endearment), in *Kusumbha* (fickleness), and *Manjishta*, (aggression). The flesh of Sakuntala has not perished, because, in Kalidasa's portrayal, her love shines more brightly in the agony of betrayal by king Dushyanta. And the seasons live with the buoyancy in which nature reveals the parallel rhythm of love in the glow of sap:

> "Already love torments my mind,
> importunate in prayer for a
> thing unatterable; what shall
> it be when the woodland mango
> trees display their buds, a
> pallied whiteness opening to
> the southern wind."

Indeed a new sun dawned on the Gupta age and lit up many hearts with the warmth of unabashed loving.

And in the series of Sanskrit plays during this age, as well as in the pictorial representation of mythology in the temples, the same vital principles and situations are dramatised, so that though they carry hints about the immanant Gods, towards whom men reverently lift their heads, they mainly delight the senses and are supposed to afford *Rasa*, delight, aesthetic counterpart of *Ananda*, joy, which is the object of mystical union.

Poetry in paint

Undoubtedly, there is much individualist creative activity in the poetry and paintings of the Gupta Age. And the rich, expansive world of feudal empires, becomes a kind of kaleidoscope, which reveals the loveliest flowers, in its turnings. One finds wonder and delight in contemplating the hauntingly tender beauties on earth in the poetry of the period.

And there are Bacchanalian scenes in the poetry of paint in Ajanta, amorous tableaus which appear to bring the ineffable luxury of bodies burning with passion before one's eyes. The pagan ambience of dark sensuous bodies glow as though the painters were portraying the here and now of intense moments. Even in this splendrous art, which exalts human passions and feelings, we are dimly aware of the evanescence of the phenomenal world. But the lovely girls in the poems of Kalidas carry forever between their wine jar hips, the secret of the sensual mystery, as

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

also continuous creation, through the profoundly holy, sensuous and beautiful sexual act.

The profuse erotic scenes which were seen in the temples were not only meant, therefore, to excite the onlooker but as intimations of the creative urges in those very situations where we are most likely to forget them. Silently flowed the stream of life, and it was at one's peril that men and women could forget to love to renew themselves.

Kama Sutra of Vatsyayana

In the masterly text book of love, the *Kama Sutra*, obviously affected by the Tantras, the sage Vatsyayana, who was probably the later contemporary of Kalidasa, seeks to fit *Kama* (love) into the four-fold Hindu scheme of life. "Man will attain perfect happiness by serving *Artha, Kama* and *Dharma*, in this manner. Cultured men engage in activities that do not endanger one's prospects in the other world, that don't entail loss of wealth and that are withal pleasant."

Integration of pleasure of love into the Hindu life pattern

The four-fold scheme, to which Vatsyayana refers, had already come to be accepted as a rationalisation of ordinary practice. Dharma, the practice of social righteousness, *Artha*, the pursuit of prosperity, *Kama*, the pursuit of pleasure, and *Moksha*, the striving after liberation, was all considered complementary as well as exclusive of each other. Thus *Dharma*, or righteousness, and *Moksha*, or liberation, go together as do *Artha*, or prosperity, and *Kama*, or pleasure. Also, symbolically, righteousness and prosperity, and liberation and pleasure, have features in common : the first pair binds while the second releases one from attachment. The virtuous and the prosperous man is steeped in worldly values. But the man who seeks release from the trammels of existence, or wishes to dissolve the pleasures of this world, tends to ignore both wealth and morality.

The transition from the life of pleasure to the dedicated life of the saint has often been very sudden in India, while those who have chosen the good path in the world have sometimes also succeeded in amassing wealth. So the sanctions established by religion seemed to show a broad understanding of practical happiness. And, sexual pleasure came to be exalted as the symbol of Supreme Bliss, to derive divine sanction for the natural earthly urges. It was even interpreted as one of the ways leading to salvation. The elasticity of the whole conception gave room for indulgence in the play function of sex.

It is conceivable that these concessional doctrines were emerging, because of the large number of people who, while accepting the tenets of Hindu religion, were unable to live up to the seemingly pessimistic concept implied in existence as suffering, and release and absorption into Brahman as the only goal. A rich, fashionable feudal aristocracy had arisen, which had the means of enjoying the pleasures of the world, and women who were given an ignominious position in the Hindu social system by

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

the law giver, Manu, regained some of the regard they had enjoyed in the early Vedic Age. The liberal Buddhist attitude towards the lower orders from the Hindus differed.

Sex as awakening of sensibility to joys of life

Vatsyayana's encyclopaedia of sex is avowedly a compandium based on previous texts on the general and special problems of sex. He mentions the names of some of his predecessors : by Nandi, Svetaketu son of Uddalaka, Vabhraya Panchala, Dattaka, Charnyans, Ghotamukha, Gonardiya, Gonikapatra, Suvarnanha and Kuchumara. All the previous writers, as well as the author of the *Kama Sutra* had reflected the psychological aspect of love in their enquiries. But Vatsayayana deliberately treats his book as a part of the medical system of Ayurveda. His hypothesis seems to be that sexual curiosity is, apart from the awakening of sensibility, the way to joy in life. Also if denied, if could be the main cause of the perversions. It must be satisfactorily explained and analysed, so that such education can lead not only to healthy enjoyment of the variegated pleasures of the body-soul but also clear the mind of all shame, awkardness and guilt attached to the private act. Also, no hidden longings should remain in the mind of the human being which might prove to be a hindrance to spiritual progress.

Truly, as Sir Richard Burton, the Orientalist, and the first translator of *Kama Sutra*, wrote, this work, then, which has stood the test of centuries, has placed Vatsyayana among the immortals : On this, and on him, no better elegy or eulogy can be written than the following lines :

> 'So long as lips shall kiss, and eyes shall see,
> So long lives this, and his given life to thee."

No appreciation of the erotic sculptures in Indian temples without reference to Vatsyayana's love postures

One might go further and say that the whole of subsequent Indian art tradition will remain incomprhensible and, at the best be appreciated only from partial viewpoints, if the connoisseur has not previously read this classic text about the aesthetic of love. Certainly, there can be no appreciation of the erotic sculpture of Indian temples without reference to the postures described by Vatsyayana. How can the early mediaeval love poems and writing about Sringara Rasa be significant without a persual of this source book of human connection.

'After having finished his education, the accomplished man', says Vatsyayana at the beginning of his discourse, 'should set himself to acquiring wealth, and having earned it, or come into it by succession, should lead the life of a man of fashion'.

The hero is supposed to be well-versed in literary arts, able to take part in competitions of poetic skill, a man of good taste, who knows all about the architecture of a house, can lay out a garden, who appreciates paintings and sculptures, and the arts of music and dance, clothes, jewellery and perfumes!

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

also continuous creation, through the profoundly holy, sensuous and beautiful sexual act.

The profuse erotic scenes which were seen in the temples were not only meant, therefore, to excite the onlooker but as intimations of the creative urges in those very situations where we are most likely to forget them. Silently flowed the stream of life, and it was at one's peril that men and women could forget to love to renew themselves.

Kama Sutra of Vatsyayana

In the masterly text book of love, the *Kama Sutra*, obviously affected by the Tantras, the sage Vatsyayana, who was probably the later contemporary of Kalidasa, seeks to fit *Kama* (love) into the four-fold Hindu scheme of life. "Man will attain perfect happiness by serving *Artha, Kama* and *Dharma*, in this manner. Cultured men engage in activities that do not endanger one's prospects in the other world, that don't entail loss of wealth and that are withal pleasant."

Integration of pleasure of love into the Hindu life pattern

The four-fold scheme, to which Vatsyayana refers, had already come to be accepted as a rationalisation of ordinary practice. Dharma, the practice of social righteousness, *Artha*, the pursuit of prosperity, *Kama*, the pursuit of pleasure, and *Moksha*, the striving after liberation, was all considered complementary as well as exclusive of each other. Thus *Dharma*, or righteousness, and *Moksha*, or liberation, go together as do *Artha*, or prosperity, and *Kama*, or pleasure. Also, symbolically, righteousness and prosperity, and liberation and pleasure, have features in common : the first pair binds while the second releases one from attachment. The virtuous and the prosperous man is steeped in worldly values. But the man who seeks release from the trammels of existence, or wishes to dissolve the pleasures of this world, tends to ignore both wealth and morality.

The transition from the life of pleasure to the dedicated life of the saint has often been very sudden in India, while those who have chosen the good path in the world have sometimes also succeeded in amassing wealth. So the sanctions established by religion seemed to show a broad understanding of practical happiness. And, sexual pleasure came to be exalted as the symbol of Supreme Bliss, to derive divine sanction for the natural earthly urges. It was even interpreted as one of the ways leading to salvation. The elasticity of the whole conception gave room for indulgence in the play function of sex.

It is conceivable that these concessional doctrines were emerging, because of the large number of people who, while accepting the tenets of Hindu religion, were unable to live up to the seemingly pessimistic concept implied in existence as suffering, and release and absorption into Brahman as the only goal. A rich, fashionable feudal aristocracy had arisen, which had the means of enjoying the pleasures of the world, and women who were given an ignominious position in the Hindu social system by

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

the law giver, Manu, regained some of the regard they had enjoyed in the early Vedic Age. The liberal Buddhist attitude towards the lower orders from the Hindus differed.

Sex as awakening of sensibility to joys of life

Vatsyayana's encyclopaedia of sex is avowedly a compandium based on previous texts on the general and special problems of sex. He mentions the names of some of his predecessors : by Nandi, Svetaketu son of Uddalaka, Vabhraya Panchala, Dattaka, Charnyans, Ghotamukha, Gonardiya, Gonikapatra, Suvarnanha and Kuchumara. All the previous writers, as well as the author of the *Kama Sutra* had reflected the psychological aspect of love in their enquiries. But Vatsayayana deliberately treats his book as a part of the medical system of Ayurveda. His hypothesis seems to be that sexual curiosity is, apart from the awakening of sensibility, the way to joy in life. Also if denied, it could be the main cause of the perversions. It must be satisfactorily explained and analysed, so that such education can lead not only to healthy enjoyment of the variegated pleasures of the body-soul but also clear the mind of all shame, awkardness and guilt attached to the private act. Also, no hidden longings should remain in the mind of the human being which might prove to be a hindrance to spiritual progress.

Truly, as Sir Richard Burton, the Orientalist, and the first translator of *Kama Sutra*, wrote, this work, then, which has stood the test of centuries, has placed Vatsyayana among the immortals : On this, and on him, no better elegy or eulogy can be written than the following lines :

> 'So long as lips shall kiss, and eyes shall see,
> So long lives this, and his given life to thee."

No appreciation of the erotic sculptures in Indian temples without reference to Vatsyayana's love postures

One might go further and say that the whole of subsequent Indian art tradition will remain incomprhensible and, at the best be appreciated only from partial viewpoints, if the connoisseur has not previously read this classic text about the aesthetic of love. Certainly, there can be no appreciation of the erotic sculpture of Indian temples without reference to the postures described by Vatsyayana. How can the early mediaeval love poems and writing about Sringara Rasa be significant without a persual of this source book of human connection.

'After having finished his education, the accomplished man', says Vatsyayana at the beginning of his discourse, 'should set himself to acquiring wealth, and having earned it, or come into it by succession, should lead the life of a man of fashion'.

The hero is supposed to be well-versed in literary arts, able to take part in competitions of poetic skill, a man of good taste, who knows all about the architecture of a house, can lay out a garden, who appreciates paintings and sculptures, and the arts of music and dance, clothes, jewellery and perfumes!

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

The woman, especially the courtesan, has to learn some of the sixtyfour arts from early childhood, this education emphatically including music, dance, aesthetic of the plastic and literary arts, as well as of jewellery, decoration and flower arrangement.

The whole of Vatsyayana's ethos, hinges on the psychology of education about love making, informed by acceptance of passion in love.

Art of winning confidence of woman

For instance, in the chapter "The art of winning the confidence of the wife", "the approach to the newly married wife" is analysed, "need of gentle methods" stressed, "necessity of winning" the girl's love before marital relations' enjoined, and the technique of approach is explained from "the embrace" to "the next step, the kiss", "the third step, intimate talk", "stimulation of the mammilla" and the "technique of manipulations.

Classification of sexual unions

The chapter "classification of sexual Unions" includes instruction on the following subjects: "The two aspects of sexual union, classification according to dimensions of genital organs," kinds of union according to size, kinds of union according to character of passion, kinds of union according to duration, kinds of union, four categories of sexual gratification.'

Art of embraces

The chapter "art of embraces" includes : "sixty four accessories of sexual intercourse, the technique of embrace, intimate embraces, embraces during the act of coitus, rubbing or squeezing as a pleasant accessory process."

Art of technique of kissing

The Chapter "Art of Technique of Kissing" includes : "The order of the kiss and other forms of love-play, the technique of the kiss, three kinds of the lip kiss for women, love-play with kissing by wager, the concurrent or responsive kiss, kisses on other parts of the body, other forms of special kisses, kissing of the hands and feet."

Attitudees in Sexual Communion

The chapter "Attitudes in sexual communion" includes : "Three attitudes in tight-fit unions, four attitudes in loose-fit unions, other attitudes in sexual unions, front to back or reverse attitude,attitude of chase of quadrupedal attitudes, group coitus in matriarchal societies, coitus in and on woman, condemned."

Reversed normal attitude and technique of intermission

The chapter "Reversed normal attitude and technique of inter-omission" includes: "Two ways in which a woman can take the active role, how to enhance the pleasure in coitus of a woman, signs of increasing passion in a woman, ten ways of penial interomission, three manners in reversed normal attitudes."

Conduct before and after sex

The chapter "Conduct before and after sexual intercourse" includes : "How one should receive a desired woman, what should be done after coitus, how to increase passion of lovers, varieties of coitus according to nature of passion, what a lover should do in case of quarrel with the beloved."

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Vatsyayana's all experience

These and other themes are treated in some of the Gupta works and in the whole of mediaeval temple scultpure, almost as though they were authentically drawn from life. Vatsyayana mentions the sexual habits and customs of different parts of India, such as those of Balhika (Bactria), Vidharba, Malwa, Avanti, Maharashtra, Abhira, Saurashtra, Aparantha, Dakshinapatha, Vanasvasa, Kustala, etc. It is probable that he had travelled to these places and it is certain that he lived either in the ancient city of Ujjain, which was the capital of Avanti, or in Vidharba, where the greatest profusion of erotic sculptures came to be later, apart from Konarak in Orissa. The sage does not mention Pataliputra or many regions east of Avanti, but he is likely to have known about the love life of the Ganges delta. And, at any rate, the cultural tradition of the Gupta empire spread through the length and breadth of India, and as the literary works were copied and taken to different seminaries, so the guilds of craftsmen moved often from temple to temple (even as labourers and skilled technicians move today from dam to dam), and the teaching of the arts and sciences accompanied the new schools of Brahmanical Theism, which began to emerge on the foundations of Vedic religion in the Gupta and the early and late mediaeval periods.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

10

The ferment which was witnessed in the Gupta Age had been simmering from below the surface of consciousness for nearly a thousand years in the folk collective unconscious. For instance the incredibly complex system of beliefs grouped together under the symbol *Aum* had acquired meanings both for the Hindus and the Buddhists. The patheon of many Gods was teeming, as, indeed, was the population of this prolific, lush continent, in which many races, tribes and peoples had come to live in a more or less tolerant intolerant co-existence. The seeming anarchy of religious beliefs and practices was held in check by the underlying unity of belief in the attainment of cosmic outlook. Though both Gautama Buddha and Mahavira Jinna considered the cosmos to be in change every moment and corroded the basis of the Hindu eternal cosmos, the Hindus began to rally, revive and regroup their forces from the early mediaeval period to extend the sway of eternity. Shankara in the 8th century was to reassert the One Supreme.

Schools of thought; Darshanas

Apart from the *Darshanas*, or the various schools of thought, which offered different interpretations about Reality, the doctrine of henotheism had already asserted itself, according to which the most important Gods of the Hindu patheon were exalted to supreme Godhood, by large sects, all the other gods being reduced to the position of incarnations of this Supreme Deity.

Vaishnavism
Saivaism
Saktism

The theistic assertion brought three chief dieties to the fore : Vishnu, who was the incarnation of Brahman in his benevolent qualities; Siva, who symbolised the Supreme God, as creator, preserver and dstroyer of the universe; Shakti, the consort of Siva, who was both mother and destroyer alternately. The faith known as Vaishnavism from the worship of Vishnu as Supreme, flourished mostly in northern and central India : Saivaism held sway in the South East, as well as in Kashmir and in certain pockets in the northern hills and the Deccan, Saktism was dominant in eastern India and in some part of the middle India.

It will be remembered that the Ultimate Reality, Brahman, was described in the *Upanishads* negatively as "Not this-not that" and was declared to be ineffable and unknowable, except through mystical intuition. The new schools of philosophy, in which the practical theistic faiths began to find their sanctions, affirmed that Reality behind phenomena is knowable. It is, in fact, Consciousness itself.

This Consciousness is the awareness of unity behind all forms of apperceptions, whether these be through sensation, emotion, or inspired instinct,

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

will. But it assumes particularity through Maya, the reflection of modes of consciousness, below the surface experience, which is, in its seed, the cosmic Samskara, empirically including the ordinary world.

In so far as forms of surface consciousness were admitted and the way opened for the practical human mind, *Buddhi*, to operate, these new schools of thought conceded to mankind ways of life more consonant with human apprehensions, apperceptions and intuitions.

The face and the Mask

Thus the face behind the mask remained more or less the same abstract One Brahman, the invisible source of all things, pure and unchanging, the mysterious power in which all things begin and end. But, reflecting this unity, there was the whole phonomenal universe in which everything was in the process of transformation, or change, through Karma, from plants to human kind.

Since the phenomenal world is Maya, all our lives are also expressions of this illusory stuff, and attachment to them leads to frustration and suffering. Only, in turning the mind away from Maya to the Ultimate Reality is peace to be found.

But whereas in the past ages the way to union with the Supreme God lay through Yoga, now it is conceded that through personal devotion or Bhakti, where the worshipper regards himself as the creation of Vishnu, Siva or Sakti, the deity in human form, man can seak Moksha or salvation—One of the Many can become One.

As a matter of fact, Shankara, whose commentaries had brought about the earlier concession through his doctrine of Brahman, as pure consciousness, as reflected in awareness of the illusory Maya or world of appearance, had himself sung in certain hymns and rhapsodies called *Vedanta Gitas*. Through the fervour of his Sundara poem he sought release from the phenomenal ego through recitation, memorising and meditation of the exalted utterances of his goddess-intoxicated poem. Thus, though emphasising the ineffable transcendencey of Brahman, the "Aum" without a second, in his philosophical writings, he had sung to the "second", to Maya, Mother of the world, with a passionate devotion :

Shankara's Hymn to Annapurna

"Thou who bearest the manifold world of
the visible and the invisible,
Who holdest the universe in thy womb,
Who severest the thread of the play we play
upon this earth!
Who lightest the lamp of wisdom; who
bringest joy to the heart of Thy Lord, Siva!

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

O Thou, Queen Empress of Holy Benares!
Divine Bestowar of Food Inexhaustible,
Be gracious unto me and grant me alms."

HYMN TO ANNAPURNA

This devotion to the beloved Mother had led to the popular concept that all beings are members of a single holy family, proceeding from the Great Mother.

Sex was sublimated in the longing for the mother.

Early Mediaeval Poets: The poets, were however, in revolt against dogmas. And there were echoes of lyrical feelings for freedom in the tradition of Kalidasa.

Thus Manovinda, a court poet of the Palas of Eastern India of the 9th century wrote :

Manovinda

"Oiled with saffron
and beloved of the love god
the dark lady's ouplent breast
makes the moon envious.
"When she unties her garment (blue cloud blue)
a tossing necklace of pearls circles her breast.
The nimbus of radiance is more than lunar."

Another poet of the same century, Rajashekara (late 9th century) delicately shows how the lure of the senses can negate the pure meditation.

Rajashekara

"The fall of things pure
is not without happiness
consider the young girl's tear :
it touches her cheek, and
slipping from her breast
enjoys the heaven of her thighs."

Still another bard, Yogesvara, Pala court poet (circa 9th century A.D.) says :

Yogeswara

"No word! thou art—
first, a caress,
a loosened string,
quick sideglances,
bodies trembling—And I
like Indra when passionately, swiftly
he loved Ahalya."

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

11

The waves of Brahmanical theistic cults, which swept over India, gave a tremendous impetus to Hinduism in the mediaeval period and worship tended to be ritualised. Hundreds of new temples were built, giving the original abstruse hypothesis all the glamour of music and dance and colour.

The loves of Krishna and Radha

The God who found immense popularity with the lay public was Krishna, the local cowherd prince of Mathura, who had figured as the helper of the five Pandava heroes of the Mahabharata epics. and who was now exalted to be the most familiar incarnation of Vishnu, the blessed one. The parable of his sports with his consort, Radha, and the milkmaids, now became the accepted symbol of the *lila,* sport of God with human beings, whom he loves and with whom he continually plays hide-and-seek. And a whole literature and art grew up around the joyous dalliances of Krishna with Radha and the maids, sanctifying human urges and desires among the populace, with their love for festivals of joy to relieve the tedium of sowing and reaping.

All the old harvest festivals of the ancient agrarian communities were strung together like a garland around the seasons of the year, and the heart of the populations beat to the rhythm of the drums and cymbals and bells in the temples, spiritualising each act.

Shankara Jayadeva Tulsidas, Mira Surdas Ramanuja, Kabir Nanak, Tukaram

Thus it was that, in spite of the chaos produced by the successive invasions from the north west, Hinduism lasted out through the centuries. Albeit, it was on the defensive, and many corrupt practices crept into it, and it tended to weave pattern after pattern of words out of its variety of beliefs and interpretations, so that there is an air of ossification about the codes and compendiums called the *Puranas* old books. At each difficult phase, however, it seemed to find powerful support from some revivalism or the other. And the succession of Hindu mediaeval mystic poets and saints from Shankara downwards, Jayadeva, Tulsidas, Mira, Surdas, Ramanuja, Nanak, Kabir, Tuka Ram, some of whom wrote in the Prakrits, people's speech, rather than in the difficult Sanskrit, kept the flame of resurgence alive, sometimes burning with a searing quality, dazzling and fierce, mainly by emphasizing God as Bliss, but baulked by the Islamic taboos which were coming through the prevalence of the Sultans all over India from the 12th century. downwards.

Actually, the incursions of Islamic warlords into India had begun in the 7th century with the penetration into Sindh. In the 10th century Mahmud of Ghazni swept across almost the whole of northern India and destroyed

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

important temples for loot of the treasures in them. In the 11th-12th centuries, Muhammad Ghori, from the same area in Afghanistan, had come and met with resistance from Prithvi Raj Chauhan, but he returned, with his tall slave General Qutb-ud-Din Aibak, and defeated the Rajput hero. Aibak was left in-charge and, with his capital in Mehrauli near Delhi, he began to build the Quwatul-Islam mosque, also the Qutb Minar and the masjid Arahidin-ki-Jhonpri in Ajmer.

Koran The mosque was the symbol of the new faith. From the mosque would be preached the way of life inaugurated by the Prophet Muhammad and embodied in the Koran. Man could attain perfection by doing good deeds. The Prophet had laid down certain rules of jurisprudence which were the Muslim Dharma. In family life, to give protection to widows a man could marry up to four wives. There was to be no discrimination based on colour or caste or creed. Idolatry was not allowed, as the icon stood in the way of pure contemplation of the essence of God through the breathing and suras of the exercises of five times a day. This injunction about no discrimination came as a boon to many of the lower castes and the rejects of Hinduism and they accepted Islam. But the majority of the upper caste people went underground, with sullen disregard of the invading culture. As the Hindus had proved their incapacity to establish equal human relations, the Muslims first succeeded in impressing the folk with the idea of brotherhood of man. But soon their own schisms, between those who wanted a theocratic state under the descendents of Muhammad, and others who preferred to elect the Caliph of Islam, as also the wrangling of the many interpreters of the Koran, showed that nothing could be sacred except that which the Sultan could impose on the people.

The Hindus worshipped images, so they were like the Bedouins of the days of Muhammad, idolators who thought stone was to be God.

But as the state included other people than Muslims, administration remained secular. The condition of semi-slavery prevailed. The Sultan, with his forty nobles, was on top with four hundred military officers, and heads of warriors, to fight the wars of conquest.

Islam The truths of Islam therefore, began to be dissolved by the seekers of privilege and wealth in the patriarchal feudal society. The Sultan ruled as tyrants to keep the unruly cohorts in some kind of order.

Certainly, the fervour of the new rule, waged by shining swords, compelled obedience. But, like the Raisina forest near the ridge of Delhi, except for the clearing of Mehrauli, there were vast primaeval jungles, full of snakes and vipers, wild beasts and terror-stricken men and women, in small hamlets, doing their journeys through the hell of life. The pessimism of the native inheritance soothed the people with its underlayers of

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

dependence on fate. But, against the threat of rape and torture by the warriors on horseback, who may spring up from nowhere, anywhere, anyhow, the population lost the will to stand up and fight back, and accepted the purdah of Islam for women behind the veil of the upper end of dhoti. And the slave population wandered from place to place, whole communities drifting in search of places where they could hide beyond the sound of horses' hoofs, in search of their old gods who may give some certitude, even if the price of this may be another form of slavery and death.

Only the Hindu Vijayanagara Empire in the Deccan fought back the new ensalvers for two centuries.

In Punjab, some holymen of Islam, like the Pathan Baba Farid and his pious followers, tried to fuse the core of Hinduism and Islam in a pure sympathetic faith called Sufism. Kabir a weaver turned saint, created islands of spiritual resistance in the vast disorder feudal Sultanate rule.

Mediaeval poets of passion

Some of the poetry of passion in Persian, like that of Rumi, Hafiz, Saadi, had nourished the people in the labyrinths, even under the Sultanate 12th - 15th centuries. The tragic long poem of Amir Khusrau, Duval Rani Khizir Khan about the love of the eldest son of Ala-ud-Din Khilji for a Hindu princess shows that, in the highest places, human feelings could break through fanaticism. Amir Khusrau had leaned on the Braj culture of west Uttar Pradesh and wrote love songs which were sung and danced to in the courts of Sultans.

In the nightmare time of Mughal conquers Nanak who was impressed by the Sufis, brought some light. Many of the oppressed, mostly Hindus, Jat peasants and outcastes, and some Muslims, listened to his new gospel of equality. As against the reduction of women to slavery, both by the Hindus and Muslims, Nanak desired equality for the female with the male. And he seems to have written a symbolic poem on the joys of the bed.

Much manhood had to be sacrificed, and the rebels had to become strangers to hearth and home, in the fight to preserve the new faith which Nanak founded, because, after Akbar's benign acceptance, the Sikhs faced the wrath of Mughal court.

But the history of the Mediaeval period exalts only deified patriarchs, regicide and sacrifice of men in the wars. The secret books of the Tantrics and the Krishna cult continued to be written with the adoration of the single object of love, woman, as goddess of life, radiating spiritual power. Tulsidas rewrote the Ramayana as epic poem in Braj Bhasha. Mira sang of her love for Krishna. Surdas celebrated the loves of Krishna and Radha. Tan Sen sang devotional songs in the court of Akbar. Persian

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

poets were reciting to the gentry, poems in language, based on Braj speech and a mixed language as was growing up called Urdu, which was to express the longings for the beloved in poem after poem in the late mediaeval period.

Underneath the imposed order and the new puritanism of the Mullahs, above the negations of the Brahmins, poetry alone sustained the flaming passions. The bards of Islam had always fired the imaginations of young princess by rewriting the epic stories of frustrated loves of Laila and Majnun, Shirin and Farhad, and by the ambivalent poems like those of Rumi, of human love as God-love. In the muses the feelings from the labyrinths emerge without losing fervour, passions swayed cold reason, and the bards liberated the sources of love.

Poetry against puritanism

So we find that, perhaps against the arbitrary assertion of the priests of the dominant faiths, Keshavdas in his *Rasikapriya*, Surdas in his songs of the Raslila of Krishna and Radha, and Mira in her heart cries, ushered the creative freedom of longing against the tyranny of the sacred injunctions. And as poetry couched in the myth of the divine lovers had already assumed the sanctions of religion, albeit in the provisory manner of dissent, the verses of these bards found in the daily life of the masses, echoes of heart-beats to which songs were sung during the various festivals. The human creations of poetry became lawless laws on their own. And the new myths exalting seduction inspired the daily life, while the temples and the mosques remained places of ritualistic religiosity.

The romance of the Pathan Prince Baz Bahadur and the poetess Rupmati, started another wave in the mediaeval age, which showed love more miraculous than God, making the certainties of the faiths irrelevant to the life of passion. The horror of sacredness dissolved before the love songs of Rupmati.

The musical modes of Ibrahim Adil Shah, learnt from his Hindu wife brought another example of the lure of happiness which always revivifies the arts inspite of the contempt of moribund faiths. Indeed, the joy of existence, the gaiety of action. The pleasures of creative arts, appears against all the gaiety of action. The musicians are known to have carried an empty coffin of music in defiance of the puritan Aurangzeb.

The truth about human life is that the sap always flows. The new young have impulses, fragmentary as they may be. And though mutilated by a thousand and one prohibitions, the abandon of youth is inevitable against the fixations of the priests and their idols. Blood rushes up and stirs the extravagances of blasphemy against the directed order of puritans. And fresh impulses enter the whirlpool of life, where survival is only possible through yearning for the mate. We find painting under the Mughals reflects each pictures of lovers from Jahangir s time to the short reign of Muhammed Shah Rangila.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

12

All through the early mediaeval period, even before the establishment of the Sultanate in Delhi, beyond the court cultures, the Tantriks sustained their cults by retreating into the jungles.

Exaltation of Shiva God of energy in mediaeval Hindu India

The three of contending religions, Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, had begun to absorb much ritual from each other in order to attract the dissident followers of their rivals and absorb them in their fields. About the 10th and 11th century, the Advaita and Vaishnava cults of Hinduism had alreaady attracted more followers than others. But there was emphasis on Shiva in the more inaccessible regions of Central India, where the dark Gods had survived in the villages through the ages and through the adoption by the ruling dynasties of the Shaiva cult. Many temples came to be built, which account for the splendid enrush of vital forms from Mathura and Gujrat to Ossian and Kiradu in Rajasthan, to Khajuraho in Bundelkhand, down to Bhubaneswar, Puri and Konarak in the East.

The worship of the energy of God Shiva seems to have grown through the early mediaeval period in Maharashtra, Andhra and further south. The worship of this powerful deity tended to be secret, because it became associated with Tantrik yoga as and with the various intricate superstitions of the people, who never seem to have accepted the classical order and the exalted abstractions of any of the main religions.

Shaivita Kaula and Kapalika cults

Of the Shiva Kaula and Kapalika cults, which inspired the shrines these two are known to have been actually practised in and around Khajuraho, because there are reference to them in the play entitled *Prabodha Chandordaya*. This play was performed in the presence of a King of the Chandela dynasty, Kirtiverman, at the behest of this Monarch's General, Gopala, about 1065 A.D. There are other references in the works of mediaeval writers, Somadeva, Kshemendra, Yamunacharya and Ramanuja, to the sensuality of Shaivism, as it found expression, specially in the Kaula and Kapalika cults.

As has already been indicated, these cults were rooted in the collective conscious of the village peoples since earlier periods, Kapalika monks were noticeable in the 6th-7th centuries in Pallava kingdom of Mahabalipuram in Tamil Nadu, as is evidenced in the play *Maltavilasa* by Maharaja Mahendra Varman.

The Kaula cult appears, however, to have been rationalised by Matsyendranatha (who lived in the 10th century) and who had founded the doctrine of Yogini Kaulas.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

The ritual of the Kaula cult seems to have been based on a profound philosophical hypothesis. Kaula (or nobility) is the ultimate aim of the worshipper. It is the state in which the mind and sight are one and the sense organs lose their individuality. Sakti or energy merges with image to visualise uplift of the object consciousness. The male of Kaula is *Akula*, who is Shiva. The unity of these two results in *Inkaula*. The ritual by which this union is established is *Kolamarga*. The conception of Shiva as Mahalinga is allied to the Kaula doctrine. The energy of Mahalinga is concentrated in Bindu. The source of attraction between the male and the female are the reservoir of eternal life. The linga is a supreme concept, by worship of which the knowledge of God as the author of the Universe becomes possible and deliverance attained. The ritualistic practices and meditational techniques were emphasised as the means by which magical powers are attained through Karma yoga, disease can be conquered, and energy in the Yogi to fuse with the Yogini is enhanced.

Yoga and Bhoga are one

ike all phallic cults of the world, but more intensely than most, these Shaivites emphasised the symbolic nature of their rites. Kaulamarga is the path of controlled enjoyment of sense objects, because *Yoga* and *Bhoga* are one. The process of growth through the various states of worship is intricate, prolonged and difficult. The easiest part of it seems to have been the tasting of *Panchamrita* or *Panchmakaras*. Flowers, perfumes, flesh, fish and sweetmeats, were common objects used in joint ceremonials with *Vesyakumarikas* (virgin courtesans) for dance and song before yoga union.

The emphasis on the exalted symbolic significance of this ritual seems to have been part of the idealistic wish-fulfilment of doctrinaire theologians, seeking to adumbrate the aura of dignity and formalism around the primitive but potent magical and sensual ceremonies of a mass inured to hidden and esoteric beliefs in sex union as way of salvation. As the doctrine of attachment in detachment preached in the *Bhagavad Gita* remained an unattainable ideal, though it was universally acclaimed, so magical practice, which clothed sensual needs, were made desire-images, exalted by holistic explanations.

Ofcourse, the very idea of the wife of the householder, who may give birth to a son of God by cohabiting with a Sarva Guru, could lend itself to caricature as in the eight *Upadesa* of *Dasopadesa*. And the orgiastic ceremony described in *Narmala*, where a Kaula Guru sublimates the wife of a rich nobleman disciple, seems, in cold print and subsequent colder thought, like the most debased ritual. But it was practiced by those princes who could not beget an heir to the throne.

None of these scenes could, however, have got on to the walls of the Khajuraho temples in the 11th-12th centuries, without acceptance of the initiation ceremonies of young Hindu brides as part of the ritual of marriage, or the acceptance of union between the male and the female

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

The vital folk impulses of conjugal felicity had already been current below the surface of the courts. The human embrace with all its sensuous grace, decorated everyday objects like nut crackers.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and Sarayu Trust.

The raths or carriages of the gods were carved out with life scenes, in all its variety emphasising love scenes as part of the human pagan . The goddess Lakshmi is shown as ideal village beauty.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

The passionate kiss of the folk hero on one rath carvings shows violent love.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

The Yabyam embrace of lovers holified in later Mahayana Buddhist art became popular image of Tiberan-Nepalese religious art.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

as the height of spiritual sensitiveness, and of the extension of the pleasure of the body as vehicle of the soul in the holy universe of the temple, where people came to drink the *Amrit* of energy from the Gods. The contemplation of mating of Lingam and Yoni was a fact of nature, which was as the self-consciously acknowledged and made sacred.

Kapalika cult

The Kapalika cult, which was less rational and more instinctive, flourished at the same time as the Kaula. The Kapalikas were also known as *Mahavratins, Mahabhairavanusasana Parameshvarasiddhantin* and *Somasiddhantin*. The lack of a well thought-out philosophy to explain their practices seems to have been due to the extreme forms of secrecy in which the followers of these sects indulged. For instance, they sometimes associated human sacrifice with their ritual and laid greater emphasis on the erotic impulse. Almost as ancient as the Kaula sect, it seems to have been feared by the people, and probably evolved as much despised secret esoteric cult, restricted to fanatical orders of practitioners. Some light is thrown on their essential beliefs in Bhavabhuti's play *Malatimadhava*. The Kapalikas lived in close association with their female yoginis. The oldest temple of Khajuraho, the Chausath Yogini, is so-called because it is dedicated to the 64 yoginis. The *Agamapramanya* by Yamunacharya (A.D. 1051) mentions that the Kapalikas: "wear the sacred thread on their ash-smeared bodies, crest jewel, ornaments for ear and neck, and they bear a human skull in one hand, with a club in the other." The Kapalikas locate the seat of the Self in the Yoni, by meditation on which, deliverance is to be achieved. According to the evidence of the play, *Prabhodha Chandrodaya,* mentioned above as having been performed before the Chandela King, Kirtiverman, the Kapalikas were known as *Somasiddhantins* and that they believed in *Moksha* through the enjoyment of woman, the ideal being to become incarnate in a form like that of Shiva and enjoy the pleasure of love with a consort as beautiful as Parvati. In Rajashekhara's *Karpuramanjari,* the Kapalika, Bhairavandana, is described as heeding no Mantras or Yantras or prayers of meditation or wisdom, but believing only in wine and women through whose enjoyment he felt he could attain deliverance.

Tantra philosophy

The philosophies of the Tantra, which had been evolving for generations with the affirmative belief in the the phenomenal world were rejected in early mediaeval Bhrahminical thought.

But the Tantriks argued that the seeker can not circumvent the life of sensation, or emotion, by crushing desire in himself or shut his eyes to its manifestations, but has to go through the fires of passion. The pleasure of human love is, for instance, the bliss of the Goddess in her world-creation-dance. The joy of the urge for union of Siva and his Sakti is the interior mode of ego-consciousness. The passionate hero has only to wish away his sense of ego, and then the same act, which was formerly a hindrance, becomes the tide that bears him to the realisation of Ananda. And the same tide washes away the small ego-consciousness.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Sir John Woodroffe's interpretation of Shiva Shakti

As Sir John Woodroffe, the Tantric scholar, puts it succinctly. "The Sadhaka (the student) is taught not to think that we are one with the Divine in Liberation only, but here and now, in every act we do. For in truth all soul is Sakti. It is Siva who as Sakti is acting through the Sadhaka. When this is realised in every natural function, then each exercise thereof ceases to be a mere animal act and becomes a religious rite—a *Yajna*. Every function is a part of the Divine Action (Sakti) in nature. Thus when taking drink in the form of wine, the hero knows it to be *Tara Draomayi*, that is, 'the Saviour himself in liquid form'. How, it is said, can he who truly sees in it the Saviour Mother receive harm from it? When the Vira eats, drinks or has sexual intercourse, he does so not with the thought of himself as a separate individual satisfying his own desire, and animal filching enjoyment, as it were but he thinks of himself in such enjoyment as Siva, saying "Shivahm!" "(I am Siva)" "I am Bhairon" "Bhairavoham!"

The actual imaginative writing of the mediaeval period presents many pictures of warm sensuality which, of course, the enemies of the Kaulas attacked mercilessly, but which are not without the charm that all descriptions of the rich life of the period display. For instance, Kshemendra recreates, with a certain lascivious hunger, the scenes of Kaula indulgences which show that the Hindus had a dual sense of life: on the one hand the emotional response to the ways of pleasure, including the play function of sex, and the metaphysical sense, in order to compromise and corelate the waves of bliss, the excitement of each nerve and tendon in the human body, with the illumined moment, the exacting discipline for attaining union with One Supreme Light.

Christian approach

The so called vulgarity, which later Hindus have come to see in the love making implicit in the Kaula cult, may have derived from the western Christian approach, which considers the very central Hindu doctrine of procreation of the Universe through the union of male and female as sin. In this context, it is important to see that in the books of the ancient and mediaeval Hindu writers, woman does not appear as she does in European literature of that time, in the role of a mere landscape, to be adored and loved, but as the essential partner in the ritual of holy life, even though the law giver Manu had condemned her as temptress not to be trusted. Her generative faculties were accepted as primary human facts and were not open to the insinuations, ridicule and obscene joker of those who desire sex as lust. The concept of the sons of Gods was, for instance, admitted as an ordinary principle among the Hindus in the same way in which the Greeks accepted it. The kings and noblemen whose physical defects made the birth of heirs to the throne impossible, did not feel any derogation of their authority in inviting a priest to officiate in the ceremonies through which a son could be ensured; for, after all, the maintenance of the race was a sacred duty.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Tantric Shastras

Sex, then, according to the Tantra Shastras, plays an important symbolic role in self realisation. The five good things which are only snares and dangers for the common herd, become the vehicles of liberation for the devotee.

Says Siva to Sakti in the *Mahanirvana Tantra :* "The five essential elements have been prescribed as wine, meat, fish, parched grain, and the union of man with woman. The worship of Sakti without these five elements is but the practice of evil magic *abhicara,* a ritual that injures and destroys. The power that is the object of the discipline is never attained thereby, and obstacles are encountered at every step. As seed sown on barren rocks does not germinate, so worship without these five elements is fruitless."

The Tantric disciple then, eats the 'forbidden' fruits. And, by plunging directly into phenomena, experiences the essential non-existence of duality, realising the intrinsic purity and innocence of the seemingly dark and dangerous sphere, of the struggle towards consciousness. He recognises the One Sakti in everything, the support of the world, the source of all microcosmos and macrocosmos, the mother of gods and spirits, the eternal beloved. And thus comes release from Maya, release through full enjoyment rather than rejection.

The Yogi must, however, make love not with hysterical reactions, but with calm equanimity. Cohabitation *(Mithuna)* is not possible in the usual animal way of desiring, fearing and enjoying, but when the hero knows himself to be identical with Siva.

For this purpose ever new sexo-yogic practices were evolved by the Tantrics, through which the human body, which contains the two elements (Siva, primordial male or the static aspect, and Sakti, the primordial female or the dynamic aspect), could unite into the non-dual state of Absolute Reality. Siva was conceived as residing in Sarasrara, the cerebrum region in the head, and Sakti in the *Muladhara chakra* at the bottom. The right side of the body is conceived of as male and the left as female. The Sadhaka is enjoined to control the vital winds, *apana* and *prana* associated with the two nerves, *Pingala* on the right and *Ida* on the left, and making them flow together through the middle nerve, *Sushumna.* Mithuna could also be achieved through various sexual forms of Hatha Yoga, which were by now a variegated code of disciplined action.

Panch tantra

The ritual of the worship through *Panachatantra* has been described in the various Tantric books in detail. The most important form is *Charapuja* or circle worship. This rite is said to be performed in secrecy, either in the inner sanctum of a temple, or in a rich Sakta household at night.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

A circle of a prescribed radius is drawn in the room. In the centre of the circle is drawn a Yantra and there sits the host and his Sakti. The Sakta guests sit around with their Saktis beside them.

Tantrik rites

The Saktis can be of three different kinds : *Svivia*, or one's own wife : *Parakiva*, or another man's wife and *Sudharni*, or common woman. Some Tantric texts maintain that *mithuna* is only possible with one's wife, while others allow the union with any woman, as every woman is really the symbolic embodiment of Sakti.

A large jar is placed before the worshippers on a jewelled alter, enclosed in a mystic drawing and is filled with wine. Prayers are then said to turn the wine into nectar and to obviate the curse of the sage Sukra, who had once cursed all liquor and preached prohibition.

After this, cooked meat, fish and gram are brought and consecrated by incantations and appropriate mystic gestures.

Now drinking starts and the devotees eat meat with the first cup, fish with the second and gram with third. Afterwards the worshipper eats anything he desires.

No more than five cups of wine were allowed, the rule being : They may drink so that the state of their mind is not affected. To drink beyond this is bestial. How is it possible for a sinner, who becomes a fool through drinking and who maligns the *Sadhaka* of Sakti, to say; "I worship thee-Adya Kalika"?

Kaula rites

These Tantric rites were called Kaula rites, because of their supposed Kaula or noble nature. And one of the main aims of these rites was to raise the devotee above all sense of right and wrong. Ofcourse, it is very possible that the injunctions to maintain the ceremony on an exalted level show that it could degenerate into excessive drinking and hysterical *Mithuna*.

The philosophical basis of the cult has been explained by Sir John Woodroffe (Arthur Avalon) in a manner which brings out its mystic meaning : "By the poison which kills all animals, by that same poison the physician destroys disease. The root of homeopathy is to cure illness by that which causes illness. Amongst us also there is the tradition that poison is destroyed by poison. What then is that which makes man sin and die before this time, the object of contempt of all. The first amongst these causes are wine and woman. Meat, fish, corn are accessories. In the ordinary life these five *Tatvas* are the primary causes of the terrible incurable disease which is *Samsara* or worldly life. Man under the influence of liquor becomes devoid of manliness and worthless. The stupefying power of wine and woman is so great as to attract even the pious

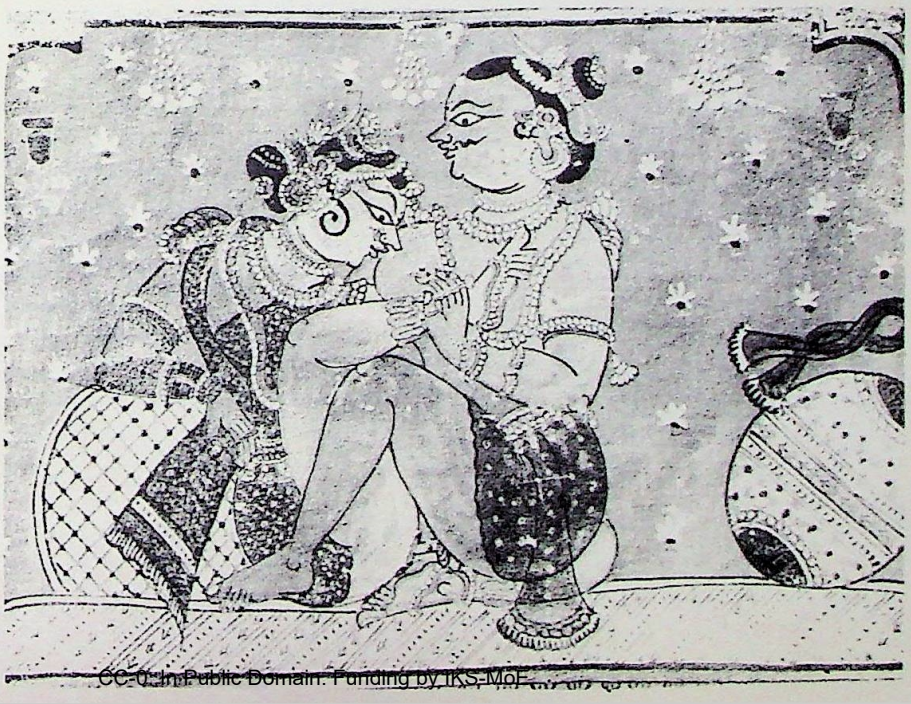
CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

and wise and draws them in to the abyss of darkness and ignorance. So Shiva, the propounder of the Tantric system, prescribes poison which eradicates poison. We know, as other Sadhakas do, that this homeopathic system of Shiva is infalible and yields speedy results. He who thirsts for wine or lusts after women can be cured by this treatment within a very short time. But the physician, that is the Guru, must be experienced and skillful. A slight error in the administration of the poison may lead to fatal results. On this account Shiva said that the path of Kaula rite is more difficult than it is to walk on the edge of a sword or to embrace the neck of a tiger. Here we give a popular or esoteric explanation of the *Tatva*. But if the esoteric meaning of them be also known, then it will be seen that in the matter of *Sadhana* they are absolutely necessary. No one who is not a *Tatva Jnani* (knower of first principles), can master their esoteric meaning."

A Kaula text

A Kaula text explains: "On this account, Shiva has prohibited the disclosure of the *Sadhana* to ordinary people. We have ourselves seen people who claim to be Kaulas but in fact they are no better than drunkards and libertines. O Reader, blame not Kulachara on seeing these erring men. A libertine and drunkard can never be a Kaula. The Kaula method is unique. On seeing a woman he sees mother and Ishtadevata in her and in either mind or body makes obeisance to her. The Saints, Gavrange, Nityananda and Advaita, are brilliant examples of the true Kaula. In the *Mahabharata* and *Vishnupurana*, it has been said that desire cannot be quenched by the enjoyment of objects of that desire. On the contrary, desire flames up like fire when ghee is thrown upon it. This is very true. No one says that the drinking of poison will not kill. But the physician administers poison in such a wonderful way that it does not kill the patient, but on the contrary the poison in the body is destroyed. The way in which the Guru administers the poison of wine and thus destroys the poison of *Samasara* cannot be disclosed to the lay public and so this is prohibited by Shiva."



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

13

The impact of jantras on Buddhism

Some centuries after the Buddha's declaration of the "Four Noble Truths" and the "eight-fold path" this doctrine also went through develoments from the original negative Hinayana to the more positive Mahayana. The first struggle against Hinduism, and the later influence of the subtle Hindu psychology of ritualistic worship, was, among other things, the main factor in bringing about this transformation. And in the fifteen hundred years that elapsed between the enlightenment and the mid mediaeval period, much elaboration of ritual took place that tended to obfuscate the first principles and to introduce magical elements, which made this religion more amenable to the priests and also brought it into line with Hindu thought, until we see the emergence of Tantric Buddhism, the concessional doctrines of the Hindu Tantras, relieving the patriarchal puritanism of the Advaita monistic mainstream.

Mahayana Buddhism had interpreted the riddle of the universe through the concept of the Bodhisattva-Avalokitesvara, potential Buddha.

Avalokitesvara refused Nirvana, because he was filled with *Karuna* "compassion" for those who cannot travel on the hard road. Karuna is thus the essence of the Bodhisattva and ensures his right perception of the void. And through compassion he assumes the various forms in which he appears as the saviour of beings in the phenomenal world. For instance, he becomes Vishnu for those who worship Vishnu, and Shiva for those who are devoted to Shiva. And, by virtue of compassion, new Buddhas are born in this world. The quality of compassion is present in all creatures. This makes them eligible to Bodhisattvahood. For all things are of *Sunyali*, the void, and the reflection of this void is compassion. *Karma* holds things in manifestation, even as it withholds the Bodhisattva from Nirvana. The universe is compassion, which is also known as *Sunyali*, the void.

Mahayana doctrine

As in the Buddha's teachings, so in the Mahayana doctrine, ignorance *(avidya)* is still the cause of all suffering, the cause of bondage to the cycle of birth, rebirth, old age and death: it is still the thing which brings affliction to those who live in desire, fear, hope, despair, disgust and sorrow. But he who is cleansed and whose soul has become one with the void, is capable of joyous wonder. Actually, those who, in their ignorance, feel themselves engulfed in pain are themselves non-beings, devoid and wanting in devotion to the search for light. Their ignorance makes them feel that they are in pain. The Bodhisattva is, however, capable of great delight, because where others find pain, poverty, disaster, vice or horror, pleasure, virtue, the "highest knowledge" reveals the void, the

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

nameless, absolute, unchanging, stainless, without beginning and without end. "By those identical actions by which mortals rot in hell for hundreds of scores of cycles, the Yogi is liberated." Thus forbidden foods such as meat, fish, spicy dishes, wine and sexual intercourse are acceptable to the true aspirant. Of course, they are not to be enjoyed in sensual eagarness or boredom, but to be undertaken without egoism and under the advice of a spiritual teacher, as there are difficulties and dangers attending these practices.

The sex act affords a profound experience of the metaphysical mystery of the non-dual entity, which has been made manifest as two. The coming together of the male and the female principles in Yabyam embrace and the consequent delight, evidence to their intrinsic unity and metaphysical reference. For through the sexual act, the creatures of the outside world come into touch with the metaphysical sphere of the non-dual source. Ofcourse, the latter is not apart. In fact, it is their own essence which they experience in every impulse of compassion, takes it to supremest height, the great delight.

From the right perception of *Sunyali* (the void) comes *Bija*, the seed; from Bija the conception of an icon is developed : and from that conception is derived the external representation of the icon : Through the contemplation of the icon, one's mind is united with the "seed": and through this seed one returns to the void. The image may be of wood, or stone or metal, or a living model, the teacher, or the devotee himself in the Yabyam or male-female embrace.

Yabyam image

The devotee can read the Yabyam image in two ways : He can meditate on the female part as the Sakti or dynamic aspect of eternity, and the male as the dormant but activised element or the male can be regarded as the principle of the path, the way, *Upaya*, and the female, *Prajna*, with which it merges, as the transcendent goal : that becomes the source in which the dynamic of enlightenment is complete, with the coming of light. Again, the dual symbol of the united couple is to be read in two ways; either the male or the female represent truth, or the two aspects of reality are equal in status, and there is no difference between *Samsara* and *Nirvana*, in dignity or in substance. "Suchness" is thus seen, differences become non-existent in true enlightenment.

The Yogic practices, through which the physical union of *Upaya* and *Prajna* are achieved, are somewhat similar both in Tantrik Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism.

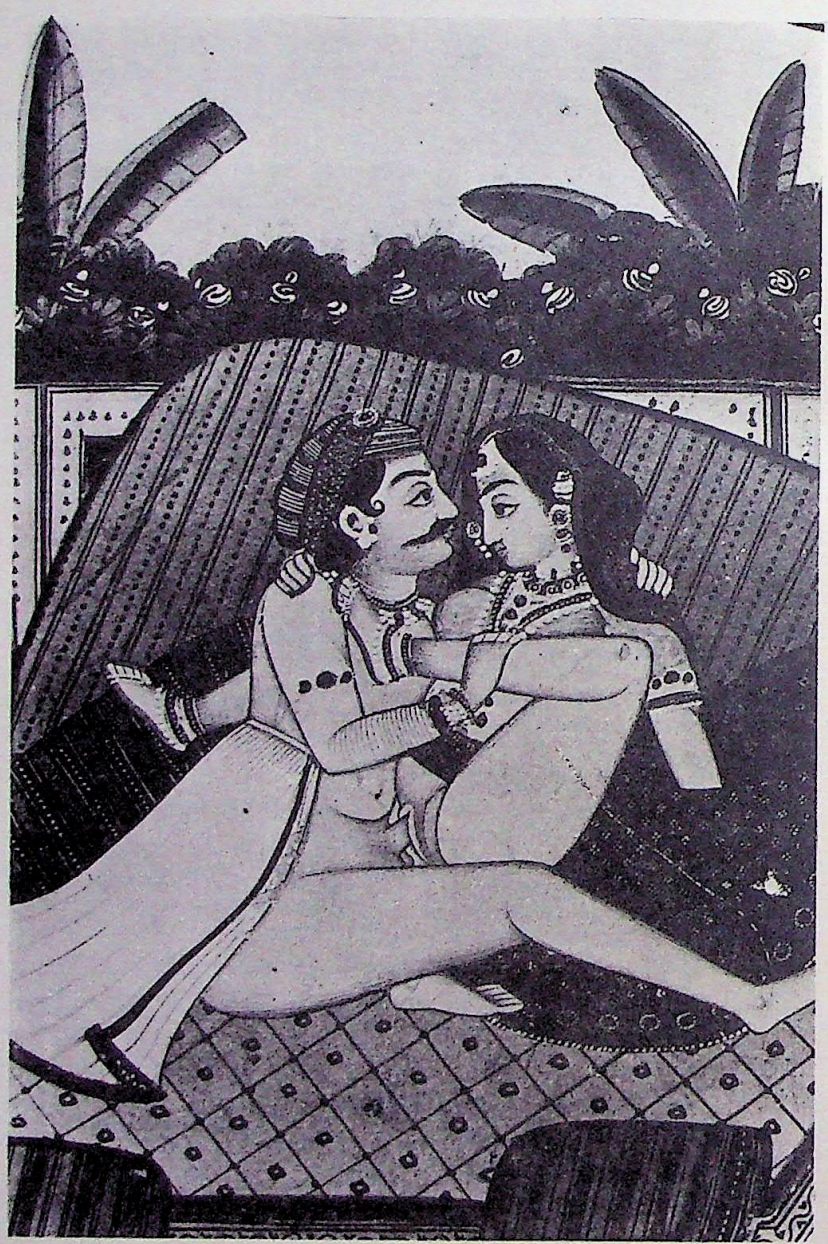
The origin and development of later Buddhist Tantric practices are sometimes ascribed to a certain Indrabhati, King of Uddiyana, who lived in the seventh or eighth century A.D., possibly in Orissa. This Raja was the author of the *Jnansiddhi*, a treatise which describes the Yabyam initia-

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

tion. And it is said that Indrabhati's daughter, Laksminkara Devi, was one of the pioneers of this aristocratic cult of love.

Certainly, Tibetan images of the late mediaeval period which symbolise this doctrine of the merging of opposite principles in timeless union in the transcendent one Reality, are some of the most striking examples in the world's art of love.



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

14

Kok Shastra of Kokkoka

Characteristically, the important book of sex knowledge of the mediaeval period, the *Kok Shastra* was formalistic and lustreless as against the bouncing, playful and gay abandon of Vatsyayana's *Kama Sutra.*

Ofcourse, Kokkoka, writing as he did, with full knowledge of the achievement of Vatsyayna's classic, was himself aware of his paucities and was apologetic about compiling the book : "This work," he said," was composed by one Kokkoka, poet, to satisfy the curiosity of the Most Excellent Vainyadatta concerning the art of love."

Dr. W.G. Archer has commented on the difference between the temper of the two compilers, to indicate the difference between th outlook of the ancient and mediaeval ages : "Kokkoka's lovers were obviously very different from those of Vatsyayana. The ancient India of the *Kama Sutra* was gay and happy. It was like tribal society of our times—Santal, Uraon and Naga. Women moved freely in public and were not secluded. Girls were courted by young men. Marriage was normal, sometimes on a plural basis. Pre-marital love was common. So too was extra-marital sex. Courtesans were greatly admired, but other women also had sexual adventures. Vatsyayana thought it worth while to discuss these at some length and it is noteworthy how very few kinds of women were really excluded...

"Against this bland and sensuous regime, mediaeval India stood in sharp contrast. The goal of life is the same. It was a final breaking out from a chain of births and rebirths. But the terms of living were now much harsher. Rigid principles had been adumbrated. Morals were tighter. There was more strain."

And Dr. Archer quotes from the mediaeval text. *Brahma Vaivarta Purana,* which defines the role of the wife :

Wife enjoined pati seva

"A chaste woman serves her husband, the source of her dignity. To a chaste woman, the husband is a friend and a God. She is helpless without him. He represents all her prosperity. The husband, the source of her virtue, happiness, contentment, tranquility and honour can solely appease her jealousy and elevate her to dignity. Of all substantial things in the world prized by a woman, the husband is the best. He is the best of friends. He maintains her, preserves her, gives her material prosperity, is lord of her life, enjoys her. There is none dearer than the husband to a woman—a vile woman, who is independent of the control of her husband, resembles a sow in all her features."

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Sita, queen of the God-king Rama, was resurrected as the ideal wife, because she committed suicide, when her husband doubted her virtue as she had stayed in Ravana's palace after her abduction.

Inspite of the reduction of love to conventional marriage, free love survived in union of ardent lovers. As there were always in India many coexisting cultures, under the dominant court culture, the love god, Krishna, remained the idol of many. In fact, from early mediaeval times, the book *Bhagavad Purana* had celebrated his dallying with the maids.

Jayadeva's Git Govinda exalts love play

In the 12th century, the eastern India bard, Jayadeva, had dramatised the passionate romance of Krishna and Radha, with mystical sanctions, by his exaltation of free love play.

The lingam of Shiva set in yoni of Parvati was also popular in worship, especially in the Deccan, venerated by the Brahmins as symbolising 'annihilation', through conjugation, and as ecstasy, by the Tantriks in the jungles.

But the *Koka Shastra* was the semi-official text, with its emphasis on love making as prescribed between husband and wife.

And the later mediaeval book the *Ananga, Ranga,* reemphasised the prim and proper attitude towards sex knowledge : "No one has yet written a book to prevent the separation of the married pair and to show how they may pass through life without union. Seeing this, I felt compassion (for husband and wife) and composed the treatise."

Dr. Archer comments aptly : 'The *Ananga Ranga* is a marriage manual, not a lover's handbook.'

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

15

The metaphysical reversals of the Advaita of Shankara were to become the breath of poets and lay philosophers in the late mediaeval period.

The Brahmins had yielded to the bondage of the inexpressible by repeating the myth that God Vishnu had gone to sleep with the beginning of the Kali Yug, on the primaeval waters and would not wake up until the age of truth begins again.

The bards, minstrels and the folk singers, however, wandered across the countryside, with their hand drums and flutes, singing songs of happiness on earth, in return for alms on festivals of birth and marriage.

Love gods under ground

In the interior, as in the Braj country, on the banks of the Jumna, flourished the Pushti Marg, the way of pleasure; preached by Vallabhacharya, which drew Maharaja Sawant Singh of Kishangarh with his mistress Bani Thani, in the 18th century, to Brindaban, after he had given up his throne to his son.

At the more intense levels of consciousness, the words and images of the Tantra multiplied in subterranean shrines.

In the popular philosophies of the Tantra of the late mediaeval period, the gracious mother goddess, was emerging as Kali, who tramples on the prostate body of her spouse Shiva, asserting freedom from the bondage to the traditionally honoured male, she is symbol of liberation itself. In her struggle against male chauvinism, woman negated her slave status.

The reversal of the conventional importance, by the Tantrik thinkers is symbolised in the myth, where Shiva himself revolts against the denigration of female power.

There was to be a grand celebration in the house of Daksa, the father-in-law of Shiva. All the gods were invited, except Shiva, who was despised as a wanderer of the cremation grounds. Whereupon Shakti hereself went uninvited. As she was ignored, she got on to sacrificial alter. At this Shiva was so insensed that he cut off Daksa's head, scattered the congregation and ended the festival.

This myth showed the turning away of people from the puritan Yoga of the Brahmins. The rebels considered the mumblers of prayers in the big temples to be slaves to customs, bound hand and foot to empty ritual, repeating dead words to earn alms.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

There were many echoes of the reversal. The defiance of conventions was lauded by the folk. And Shiva-Shakti cult, inspired many kings, heroes and heroines to join the secret cults, which were being practiced in Maths devoted to the worship of Shiva and the sixtyfour Yoginis or women devotees.

The only people who could wander unmolested in the time of warring chieftains were holy men of the various orders.

Revival of Tantras in mediaeval India in Kama Yoga

So divines of all the faiths travelled to the Maths of the various secret faiths.

Of these the Tantriks were the most active. And their magical ritual drew the most ardent devotees, specially in Bengal.

It was in this atmospere that many texts of the Tantrik *Kama Yoga* came to be written.

The *Kama Yoga* was based on the restoration of the much condemned sex centre within the orbit of holiness of human love.

The *Ashtanga* or eight-limbed yoga, defined by Patanjali in his *Yoga-Sutras* (200 B.C.) had mentioned the following approaches : (1) *Yama*, or abstention from wrong-doing: (2) *Niyama*, or moral observances; (3) *Asana*, or posture; (4) *Pranayama*, or control of breath; (5) *Pratyahara*, or withdrawal of the mind from sense objects; (6) *Dharana*, or concentration; (7) *Dhayana*, or meditation and (8) *Samadhi*, or merger with the centre of self through surrender.

The true Kama Yogi

The Kama Yogis self-consciously postponed the last two approaches. They regarded the body as the temple of God. And they incorporated all the physical exercises of Hatha Yoga, performed by the tangible body, through which men and women could be involved in the life process and yet achieve salvation. They believed that the life of feeling is rooted in the cell nerves, tissues, muscles and other organs of the body. They held that when a person can control his organs with the light of reason, follow the illogical-logic of evolution, through his or her will, he or she may aspire to fill the vessel of being with the milk of which the source is in the base of the spine itself.

The Yogi, treading the path of will, may ultimately give up his will and surrender to the inner self, and begin the journey from the known to the unknown. But this requires faith in achieving the ultimate, which most people do not have at the beginning of the search. Many worshippers go on whispering in the dark and begin to believe that they have realised God merely by pronouncing His name. They ignore the fact that the body has to be trained before the fusion. Actually, they have no faith in the body, which they consider to be impure, devilish and distracting from the path.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

The true Kama Yogi, then, accepted the life-force in each cell of the body and sought to release the *vasanas*, or energies, intensifying sensations as vehicles to achieve expansion of consciousness. In sex connection, prepared for through loving, the sensual energies were supposed to be released in the bodies, enabling the partners to mingle in the flesh, without guilt and shame, thus achieving grace of illumination.

Durga Puja

Thus there was recovery of faith in the body-soul, which the Brahminical hierarchies had drowned with their prohibitions. The life affirmations of the Shakti worshippers brought reverence to the giving of birth. At the popular level the Durga Puja of Bengal compensated the death wish of the upper hierarchies with prayers to the mother, which the learned could put before the incoming Christians as part of grace incarnate, the Mother Goddess who challenged the evil demons on behalf of believers.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

The Assault of the West

While the various threads of feeling were being extended at the deeper levels of Tantra, or collection of thoughts, practices in books, there came upon the hidden Maths, the physical impact of western intrusions, through the extension of the hold of the John Company. And, with the sword came the cross, perhaps to expiate the guilt of the conquerors, but actually from the belief of some of the westerners, that the heathen might be converted, for their own good, from the worship of their many-armed and many headed gods and goddesses to the mercy of Jesus.

Aware of the decay of Hindu customs and manners, with its split system of caste, burning of widows and child marriage, the Brahmanical intelligentsia reacted with grandiloquent defence of decadent practices.

They asserted that when the ancestors of the whites were still living in trees and worshipping Woden and Thor, the Hindus had thought out a cosmogony of eternal space-time, that we had a Buddha and a Jinna long before Christ, that we had an inner approach to reality long before Plato and St. Augustine and that we had evolved sciences and arts before the renaissance of Europe—and had experienced all possibilities.

The forward intelligentsia, led by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshub Chander Sen, Ishwar Chander Vidyasagar and Tagore was more balanced. They admitted that Indians had lost many of the important value of the past and had become ritual ridden. So they urged the synthesis of the perennial cosmic philosophy of the Vedas, with the new knowledge of the West. And they formed the Brahma Samaj to revive the lofty teachings of the Vedanta, and to abolish caste, promoted the ban on Sati, campaigned against child marriage as also stood for widow remarriage.

The battle of ideas proceeded :

The conquerors promoted reason and some faith. They imposed all teachings in the English language, to open up opportunities for clerks to run the state machine at lower levels.

Battle of ideas of East and West

The conquered, inwardly aware of the lapsing of their faiths, began to compromise. They wished to put on sola hats, but also to go to join hands before the goddess Kali with the bulging tongue in Kalighat. They admired the Mem Sahibs who danced foxtrot in the arms of other men than their husbands, but rebuked their own wives if they looked at another man. They furnished their lives with chairs and tables, but retained the mandalas of idols, at home, only adding the photo of Queen Victoria to the

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

pantheon. Decimated half bodies, half minds, and half souls, they joined hands to the white sahibs like beggars, who considered them "black men shitting on the ground." And yet the clerks abjectly salaamed the Sahibs, but refused to uplift the folk, who had been made bond-slaves, to plough the land, clear the dung, skin the animals and fetch and carry worldly goods.

Padris preach original sin to lower people

The lower peoples, the bottom dogs, and the untouchables and forest folk condemned to survive in squalor, began to listen to the Padres. They began to believe that they were suffering, because they had sinned, as, indeed, the Brahmins had also told them, that they were born outcastes because of their past karma. And they hoped that Jesus would uplift them.

Also, the talk of Padres seemed to be the call for sacrifice of the present sinful life to achieve the freedom of paradise in the next life. Furthermore, the vague dream of lowly man to somehow be raised from the lower depths to godhood seemed possible to realise. The miracle of a new life with western hat was dangled before the depressed, the suppressed and the oppressed. And some millions of untouchables, outcastes and rejected, became converts to the faith of Yessuh Messih.

Being born pagans, of the earth earthy, the hedonism of the life of song and dance and liquor, was in their body-souls, and their conversion to the saviour was seldom real.

And yet the accepance of faults, which one had not committed, entered the hearts of the innocents. Confessions before the holy father seemed to relieve the sinners of some of the burdens on their chests. But underneath the pagan impulses survived.

The price which the new converts had to pay, however, was heavy. The love of the instinctive life, in the heightened moment, in the glow of the full moon nights, the pleasures of eating the fruits of the earth and celebrating the life was denied. Desire became taboo. The guilt of indulgence in the fervours of communion in dance, of beating the drum to announce to the world to come and share in the happiness of festivals, and to join in singing choruses, gave place to the solemn processions of two, and three, going benthead, to the obscure corners of the Church, to hear sermons about the necessity of being saved from the anger of the Father in heaven for sins commited on earth. The God of the old Testament had said : "I am a very jealous God!—those who don't follow me should be crushed and thrown into hell fire : Those who don't obey me, great revenge shall be taken on them!" True that this harsh teaching was softened by the Padres, assuring the dumb believers that the God of the new Testament, of whom Jesus was the only son, was full of love. But the fears from which the people had accepted slavery to some of the cruel Hindu gods, were accentuated. And the sense of shame entered the act

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

of conjugation creation, which, inspite of the penalties of the Hindu faith, had been incipient in the miracle of birth being attributed to Brahma's love play with his consort.

One of the great redeeming features of the Hindu religion had been the commonly accepted legend, made popular by Lord Krishna's advice to the Arjuna. "To live in action." From the existentialist despair of the hero, the Pandu prince had been rescued to the belief that man can fight against wrong and create himself. The ancients had moved in all directions. They had sought all experiences. They had looked for alternatives.

In order to prove to the Christians, that they too believed in suffering, the Brahmins began to claim that they had always sacrificed happiness in the present life, to gain a new life in paradise.

Brahmins revive Hindu puritanism

In fact, the old conjurers, the priests, outdid the Christian Padres in emphasising that man had to abjure his autonomy to accept the taboos of indulgence in sex, in dance and music. And they tried to revive the moral code of the earliest patriarchial societies, through the revival of the Arya Samaj, by rejecting the way of cultivating the potency in man through lingam worship, as something unseeable, unmentionable, unworthy.

Puritanism also entered the national liberation struggle. Some of the merchants, worshippers of Mammon, who wanted the men and women in the coming new order to exercise happiness of the leisure society, and to work on the conveyor belts, suggested that the Sun temple of Konarak be destroyed and a new pure temple be put up in its place to wipe out the memory of phallic worship of the mediaeval shrines.

Mahatma Gandhi preached celibacy

The predilections of Mahatma Gandhi for accepting the vow of chastity, to control the flow of semen, so that the necessary moral strength may accrue to him to face the ordeals of the freedom movements, were used to instil the idea, in the subterranean silences, of a new moral code, that man is his own worst enemy, stranger to his true self, and must do penance. The heroes of the nation were considered sacred.

They must do and die. And they must train others to sacrifice all the pleasures, until they could persuade their successors to be sacrificed in turn to attain freedom, which meant, in concrete fact, political freedom, postponing the other freedoms, from taboos of orthodoxy, puritanism, rigid caste order and degradation of women.

Thus whole peoples, once inured to take happiness, by paying lip service to the Brahmanical injunctions, mentally castrated themselves. And many of the young, who had begun to extend their conciousneses to various freedoms, achieved in the West, concealed in themselves all the feelings for the rainbows of their dreams.

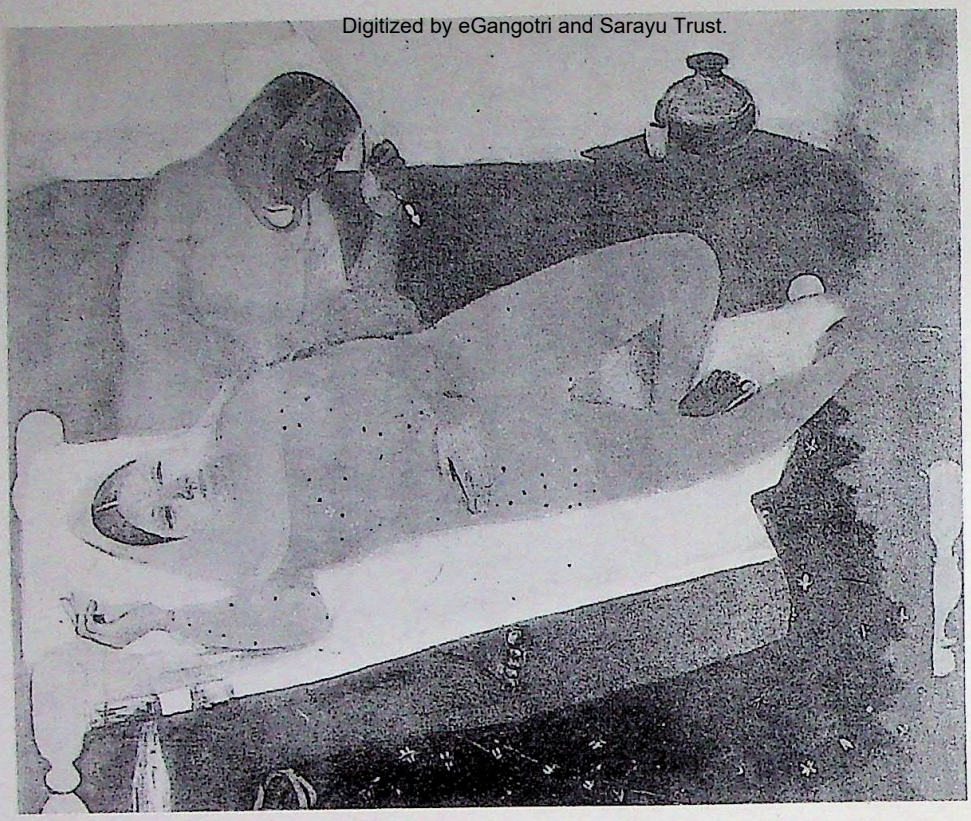
CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Jaimini Roy

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



Amrita Sher Gil

Souza

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Rabindra Nath Tagore

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

M.F. Hussain

Padamse

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

There were, ofcourse, humanists like Nehru, who wished to reclaim the lost territories of human freedom. But they obeyed the Mahatma, in every step for the extension and intension of will, to engage in the fight for political freedom. Ofcourse, they argued with the patriarch and doubted the sanctions of Brahmchari Gandhi's abstinence from sex, while he also slept with young girls to conquer sexual temptation.

Tagore for sensuous joy

The poets from Rabindranath Tagore downwards, expressed romantic impulses. The old bard had never concealed his admiration for the love poetry of Kalidasa. Nor had he denied his loves. And he exalted the marriage of choice against the arranged marriage in his novels. He wanted to make life a series of aesthetic experiences. He wanted the aesthetic of joy to enter poetry. He wrote the most sensitive lyrics. He made the sensuous into the spiritual. And he inspired the new generations with his religion of man.

Bharati

The poet Bharati in Tamil Nadu, also asked for life in fullness of living experience, in freedom of body and mind.

Vallathol

And Vallathol in Kerala was for poetry and courage, dance, music and happiness.

The new young poets of Bengal, Sudhin Dutt, Buddhudeb Bose, Bishnu Dey, proclaimed their desires for a much richer life, than their fathers had permitted, and followed Tagore's exaltation of woman.

The new poets

The Urdu poets, inherited the tradition of Mir, Ghalib and Iqbal. Josh Firaq, Faiz, Jafri, Majrooh and Akhtar-ul-Iman inherited romantic love as their gospel.

The Indian-English poets, Derozio, Pritish Nandy, Kamala Das, Shiv Kumar, have urged forward towards happy valleys, sunlit peaks, and asserted love of love.

Only the hidden heritage of the Tantra has been forgotten. The layers upon layers of orthodoxy has deadened the impulses long ago, hypnotised the bereft with the vision of God as hermaphrodite, and millions of dead souls have accepted, supinely, the life of robots, chained to the routine, and appeasing their ardours in the egoism of the cash nexus society, the new cancer which spread its tentacles into the body-souls of the dominant intelligentsia during the alien occupation.

On our vast landscape, there have been recently, impacts of the psychedelic Beatles, Hippies and women's lib movements of the West, striking new notes of music and freedom of love. And there have been hundreds of thousands young from the West, who have been coming in search of life against the mass death of the body-soul in the machine soci-

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

ety, promised by the bomb civilisation, to the various ashrams, to become aware, to look for the total experience, beyond mere mental cleverness. Guru Rajneesh, alone among the spiritual perceptors, asked the young to accept the body's yearnings as soul experience, but was externed from the land of his birth and other lands as well for his advocacy of free love.

Desire rejected by majority

These experimentalists, who desire to renew themselves, are rejected by the major part of Indian society. The young may see films of sexual titilation, but no kissing is allowed in Bollywood, Mollywood and Collywood. Masterbation is encouraged as ninety per cent marriages are arranged. The new young learn to despise their desire. But it is likely that the revolution for release of desire, by the release of women in the West will inevitably open up freedom of loving in new dimensions, impelled by the wish for happiness against the taboos.

After half a century of wandering into blind alleys of revivalist spiritualism, the Vichitra group of the poet Tagore's nephew, Abanindra Nath, gave way to the new experimentalists with life, (including the old poet himself) in Gaganendra Nath Tagore, Jamini Roy and Amrita Sher Gil.

Gagenendra Nath Tagore satirised the Bengali babus, one leg in dhoti—another leg in trousers. And he threw away the crutches of the Vichitra, wandered across the Himalayas, on the seaside of Puri, and by the riversides, a vagabond in the world of life and existence.

Jamini Roy turned from Calcutta to the folk, with their bold recreations in Kalighat pats,in the live earth colours of village toys, in the dynamic scribbles of Santhals, as also to the abandon of Van Gogh, and exalted the love God Krishna.

Amrita Sher Gil discovered both the agony and the ecstasy of village life. And she found the aesthetic of passion in the Cochin murals, in the *Rasmanjari* of Basholi, and in the moments of her own loves.

Sringara Rasa

The burgher painter from Ceylon, George Keyt, submerged himself in the *Sringara Rasa*, and has recreated, in new vital paintings, with the most glowing colours, the festivals of loves of Shiva and Parvati, Krishna and Radha, and of the Singhalees folk, in canvases which may be the precursers of new experiments in possibilities of paint, for the expression of those stirrings which were suppressed by the Christians after Adam and Eve sinned in the paradise of Lanka and were exiled.

The later experimentalists, Hebbar, Chavda, Souza, Hussain, Padamse have celebrated the body's rapture, self-consciously, urging towards liberation into ardent consciousness of the love embrace, caught the vibrations of music and dance in several works of passion.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Panicker, Biren De, Santosh, have reached into their interiors, to confirm the symbols of the Tantra, as fresh aesthetic experiences.

Hussain accepts the body's rapture as the primary principle of his work.

And in the paintings of Vivan Sundaram there is a vital romanticism in revolt against the suppression of passion.

It is likely that the blight of puritanism is disappearing through the passing of the puritans, and the new young will wander in all directions, with their hearts open to all experience, face woman freely as equal in love and not an object of use, raped from gaucheness and shame on the first night of every marriage.

It must be admitted that it is the slow death of the machine civilisation (through its dedication to Mammon, and the bombs with which to ensure it), has brought afresh, first in the West and now in Asia and Africa. And it is through the brave teachers from Europe and America, like Bertrand Russell, Havelock Ellis, Sigmued Freud, D.H. Lawrence and Simone de Beauvoir, that reverence for the intensity of loving may come to new generations and we may go back to Vatsayayan's *Kama Sutra*, the classic which taught our people their first lessons in mysteries of human love.

It is important, however, not to forget that the sources of creativeness have been dammed up in our own land for generations under dominant patriarchy.

Survival of love marriage in the jungles

Only in the jungles, below the hills, by the pools of water, or be meandering streams, have survived aboriginal tribes, in Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa, where the young have retained the ghotul dormitory, as in Bastar, allowing the males and females to experiment in mating before marriage.

Among many of the tribes of Eastern India, the Ghotul system has died out, or is maintained in secret. But the Murias of Jagdalpur area still retain the experimental marriage before marriage as a living tradition.

After the boys and girls have attained puberty, the parents willingly send them to the Ghotul, where they themselves have been in their youth.

Aware of her instinctive preferences, the girl chooses a boy. He gives her a token comb. And they live together and court each other. "The jewel of the girl's virginity is precious," they say, so there must not be violent assault from impetuous urges. In fact, some uncle or aunt, who has been through the Ghotul, reveals to them the secrets of the sex connection. They are advised to lie down under a sheet and dissolve the otherness

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

slowly, embrace and kiss when the bodies are drawn together and sense the soul emerging. They seem to learn about the flow of fluids from the penis and the vagina and know the methods of birth control, according to the rhythm of the monthly, so as to avoid conception before they want a child.

If they learn to come together and grow into companionship, in love and at work, they marry after a few years.

But if the girl finds that her first choice is not congenial for any reason, she returns the comb of the boy she had selected and accepts a comb from anonther youth she may choose.

The girls are known to have chosen three or four times before settling down with a male partner in marriage.

Ghotul

The sensuous connection seeks inspiration in the traditional group dance, which is performed outside the Ghotul every evening, to the music of the drum, in simple one-two-three beats, with emphatic lingamyoni gestures of the opposing lines of males and females, advancing and retreating to and from each other. The gaiety induced by the rhythmic love play is supposed to create the atmosphere for coming together in the nights.

The couples also join together in the daily routine of work in the fields, cattle grazing, and cutting grass, so that they grow into each other's awareness as partners in life work.

Children of nature they learn to love nature in all its efflerescence early and establish their kinship with animals and human beings, by the worship of the images, in which the spirits of trees, tigers, cowbulls, horses, and heroes and dark gods, are enshrined by the traditional craftsman in bronze, brass, terracotta and wood. The phallic symbolism inspires the artisan in almost everything he shapes, and this makes the images vitalist, specially in Bastar area, where the starkly simple elogated figures, are shown, asserting the willed extroversion of the lonely people to survive against the odds.

It is likely that the Gandharva marriage of the princes, in the Gupta and early mediaeval periods, may have been accepted from the natural; "I marry you—you marry me", convention of the aboriginal peoples, whom the noblemen met when they went to hunt in the forest.

At any rate, the example of the Ghotul of the Muria, even in its somewhat weakining form, is a model for those in the permissive" societies of the world: how marriage can evolve its own integral ways of living, and loving, of individual in group with greater harmony than in the societies inspired by furtive love in the West and absence of love in the arranged marriage without experimental courtship and mating in India.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Frank acceptance of words and images of love necessary today.

Actually, as has been indicated throughout these notes, there is no need for apologies, or making pretences and defending our refusal to accept love between male and female through false shames taught by patriarchs. The whole tradition of frank acceptance of words and images of love in our ancient Indian culture must be taken for what it is, the expression of the natural urges of peoples, judged internally, according to the consistencies or inconsistencies in the concepts behind them, and in the light of the greater or lesser skill displayed, than through modern western aesthetic principles, which were not only alien to us, but were, moreover, reinforced by a puritanism totally outside the consciousness of earth citizens of our land: It is true that only a very few people, artisans and their patrons, can nowadays emulate the example of the great Shankara who, on visiting a legendary sage, saw him with one leg in the ashes and the other in the lap of a lovely woman, and accepted the phenomena as a matter of course. But is it likely that we can recover some part of the humility which can permit us to ask questions before offering summary judgements based on our pragmatic ego. For to go to Khajuraho, Bhubaneswar, Konarak or Puri involves an act of surrender to the accents of other ages than our own individualist, hybrid, contemporary era and the acceptance of the primary truth stated by the dramatic critic Dhananjaya, for appreciation of the arts, that "those who lack imagination are no better than furniture, walls or stones."

And if the miracle should happen that one's body soul is transformed by the will to understand, and a certain rhythm of pride swirls down one's spine at witnessing the achievements of other men, of other times, then it may be possible, after the first thrill of wonder, to allow one's curiosity to lift one from the contemporary concrete jungle to vaulting heights of intention and ambition, for sharing beauty and tenderness behind each artifact. And one may walk around the pillars of temples in reverence at the sheer grandour of the execution of concepts rendered in stone with saintly devotion, resulting in forms which, even in our own arbitrary sense of that word, are commensurate with some of the greatest creations of world art. And, then, if one's eyes, filled with the bewildering multiplicity of these works, still remain set, there may come, under the immobile rim of the lashes, the pomise of spiritual insights, which may penetrate beyond the flowers and the incense, and the dim oil lamps, to the dreams of those who stood poised, for certain moments, between the shining surface of reality and the inner core of the radiance, imploring, with whispered chants, for the light of love to come into their eyes.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Plates

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Chausath Yoginis Temple:

Shiva worship have been performed from the post vedic period to the mediaeval age through different rituals in India.

One of the main strands of devotion was of the worship of the God Shiva, by sixtyfour virgin yoginis or female devotees in temples, of which we have surviving remains in Khajuraho, Bhuvaneshwar and middle India. There were rough images of the Yoginis in ritual worship.

The images in the Kahjuraho complex of the Chausath Yoginis have disappeared. The courtyard is a bare apocalypse of Shiva's spirit of which the worship was once ferverous.

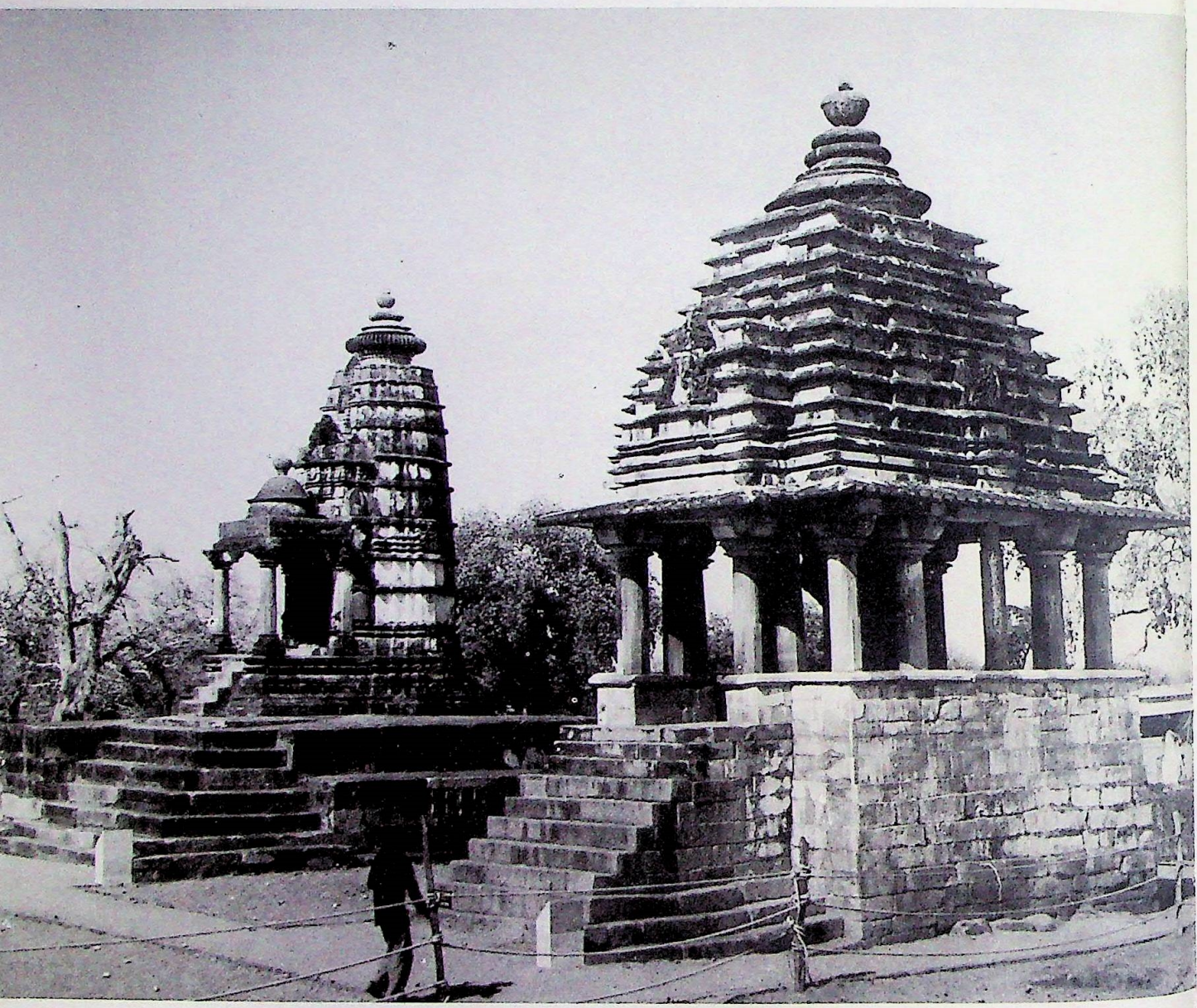
CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Khajuraho

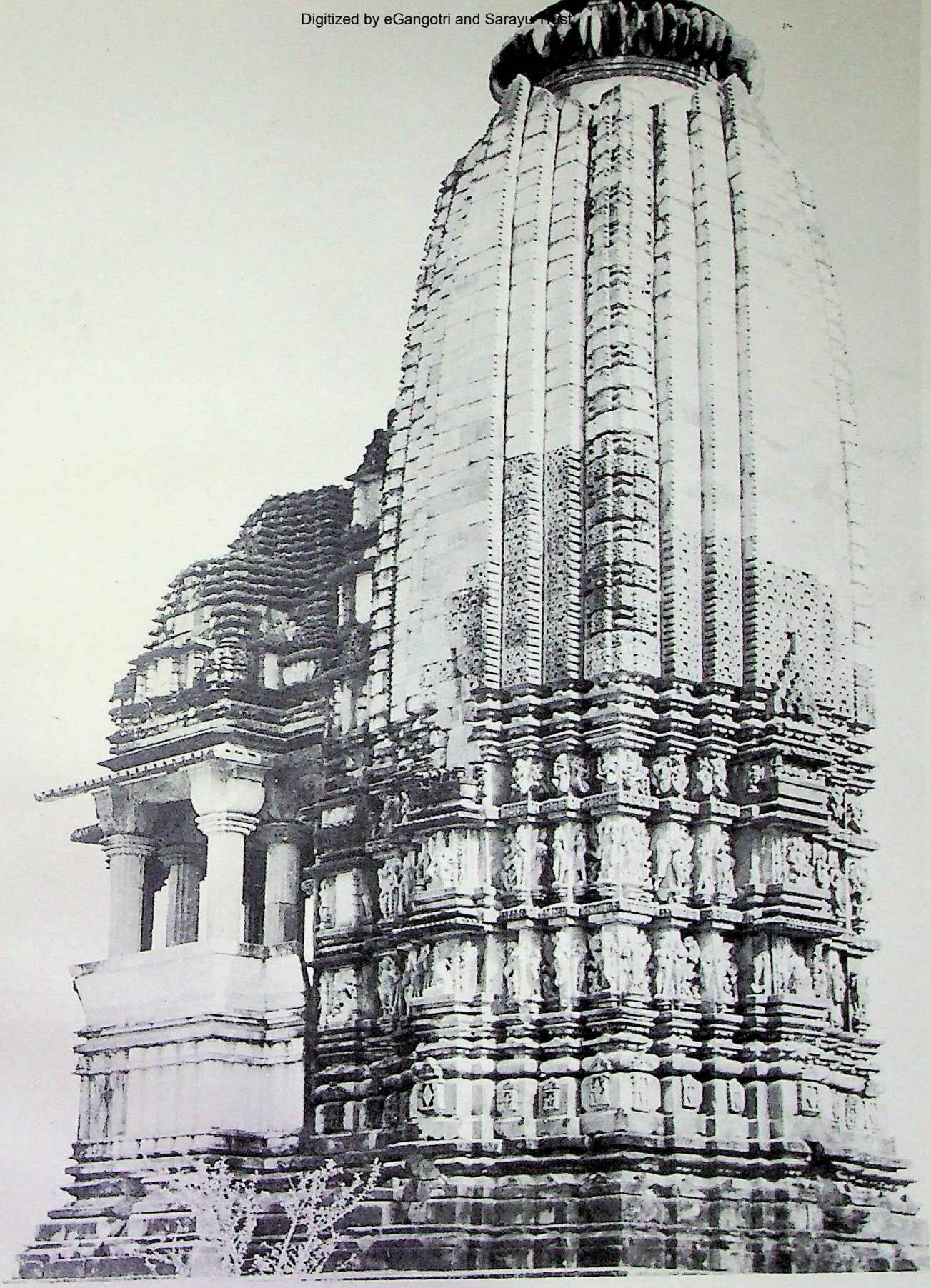
CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust

Kendariya Mahadeva Temple:

This temple is poised on a big plinth reached by seven steps. It is the noblest surviving architecture in Khajuraho, with the tallest of its five Sikharas seeming to touch the sky, in emulation of the ideal of the craftsmen to recreate the Mount Meru peak of the Himalayas to which worshippers aspired as that peak was an abode of gods.

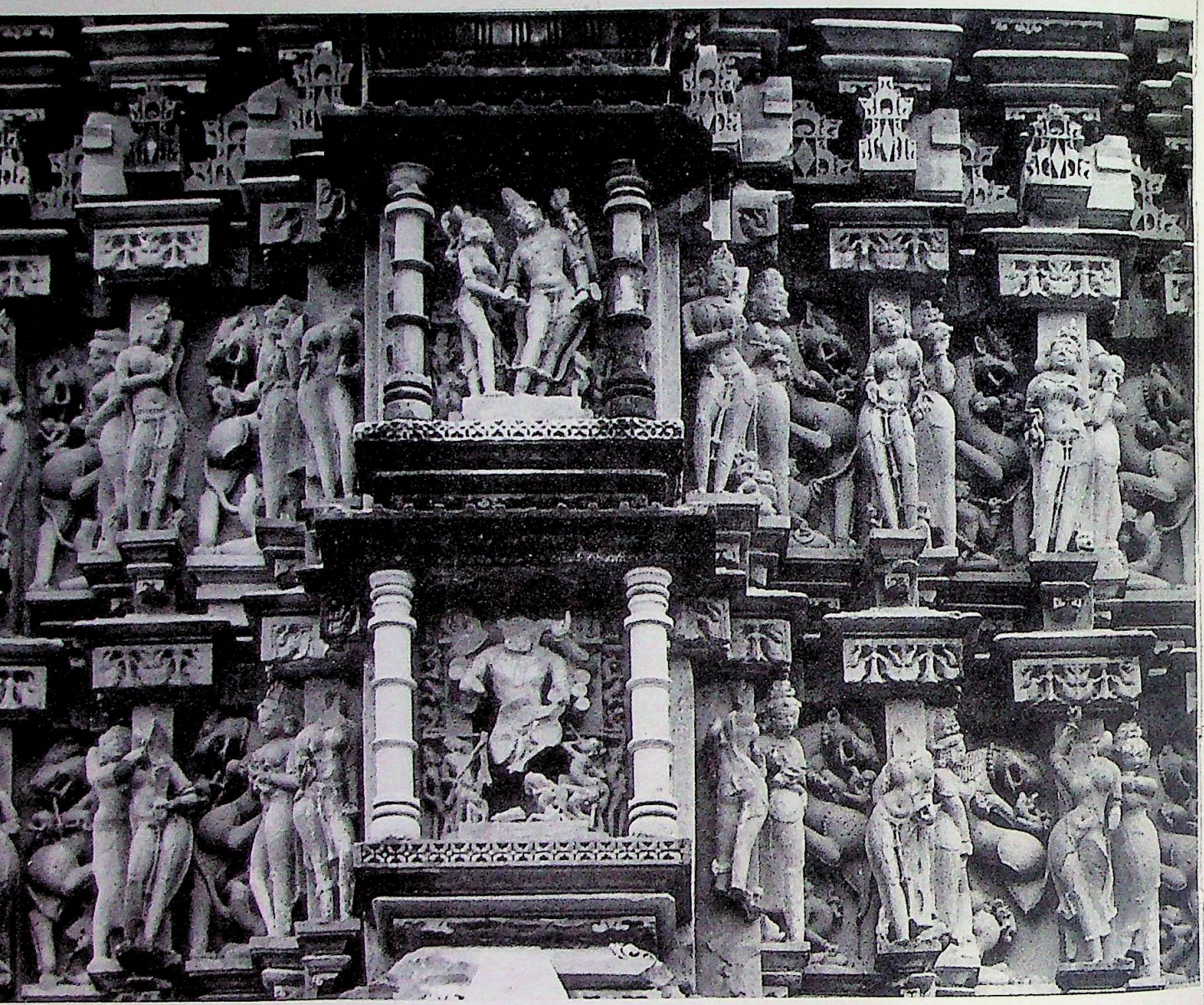
Shiva with his consort Parvati:

Shiva and his consort Parvati embody the union of hearts souls and bodies, in the loving embrace in which they are shown here.

Parvati, daughter of Himalayas fell in love with Lord Shiva, while Shiva was in deep Samadhi. Parvati prayed to Kamdev, God of love, to shoot an arrow at Shiva and awaken him. Kamdev did so. Shiva awoke and saw the beautiful Parvati standing before him. Their four eyes met and Shiva rose to take her in his arms and they were happily married in the presence of all the gods, angels and apsaras.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

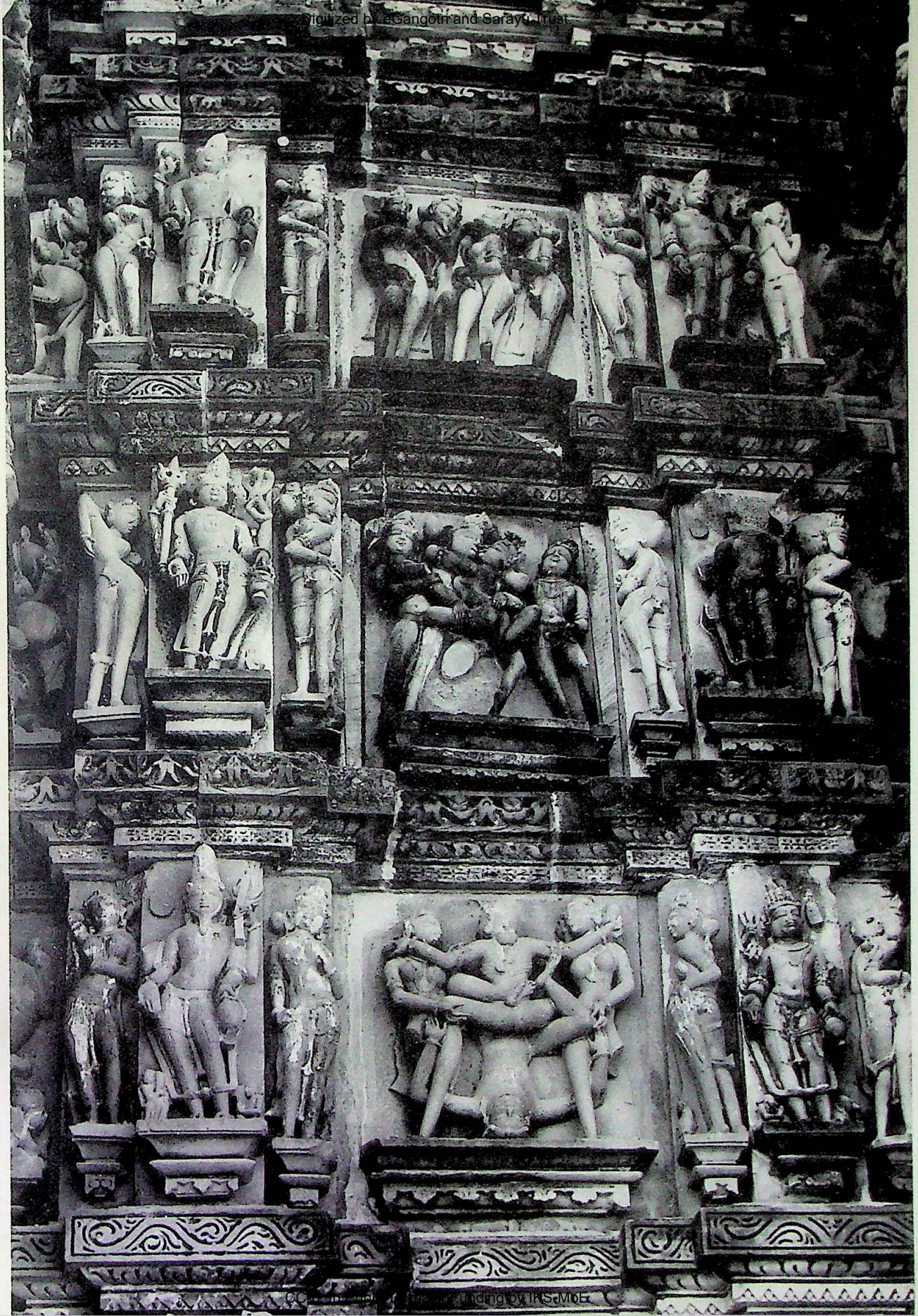


The Festivals of love of devotees of Shiva in Khajuraho:

The festivals of love of the devotees of Shiva-Shakti have been carved out in series of panels on all sides of the Kandariya Mahadeva. Shiva is shown in hidden corners. The Yogic ceremony of sexual union is shown on panels assisted by maids of honour. The composition is a kind of maze in which lovers are metaphorocally supposed to seek the blessings of God Shiva for their nuptials.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGa[illegible] Sarajevo

CC-0. In Pub[illegible]ng by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri

Preparation for the ceremony of love making was through evocation of warmth with kisses.

The tender drawing of the female by the male to himself as he bends his head gracefully towards his mate is the essence of the gentle approach.

The embrace of the couple, their bodies intertwining in the exquisitely carved stance of union shows the willing connection of the bodies as though from yearning souls.

The adumbration of fulfillment of union in the tender kisses of the two couples in the poise of acceptance, are masterly carvings of the creative act.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

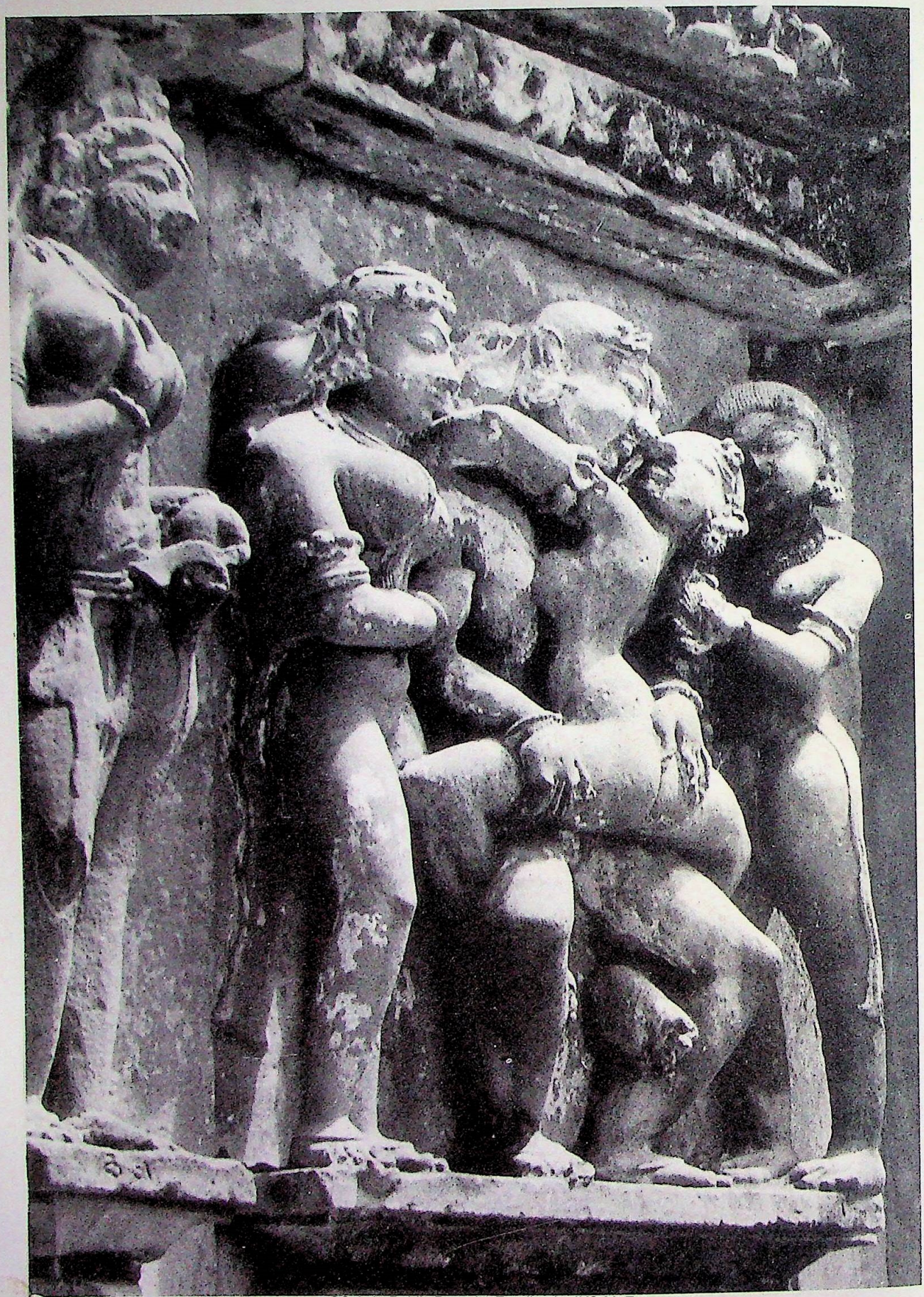
nd Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In ain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust

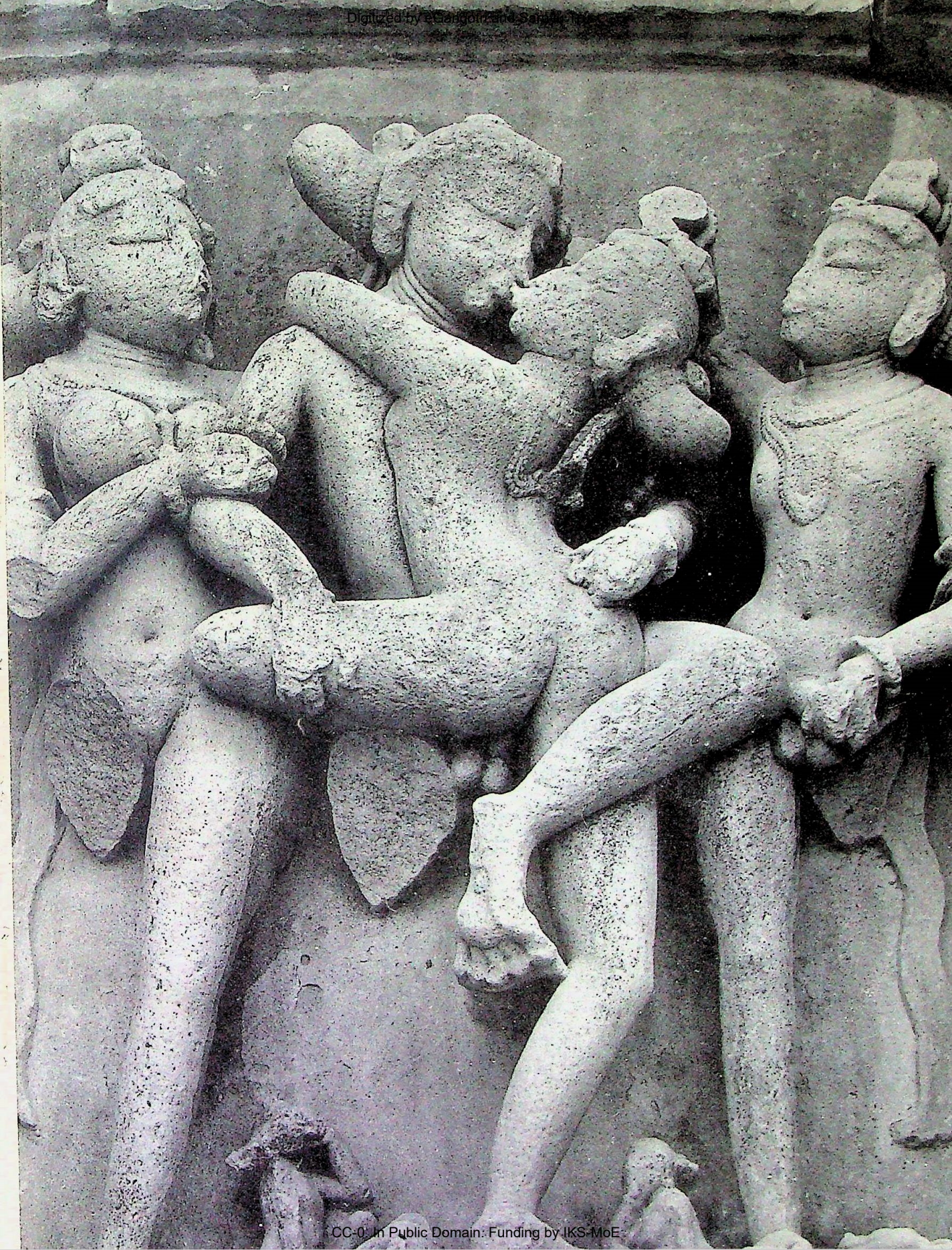
CC-0. In Public Domain. Fu

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



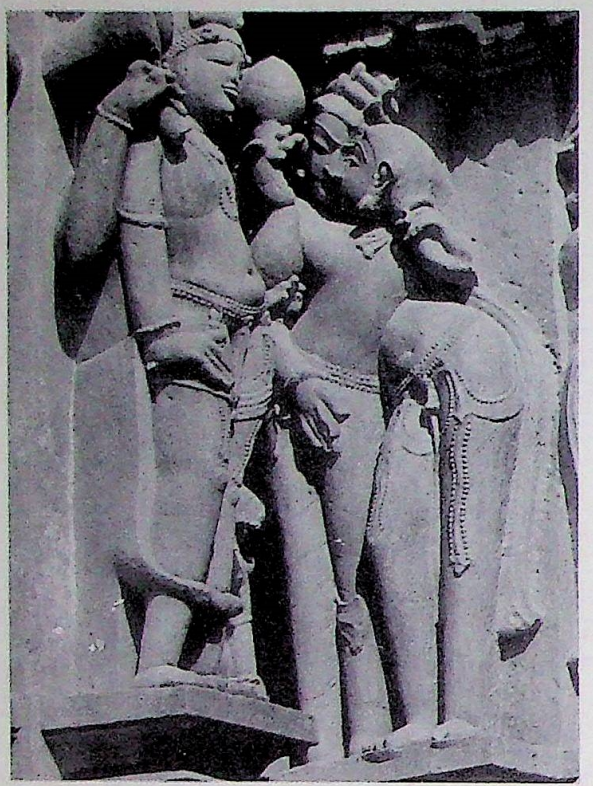
CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



Coitus:

This panel showing the coitus of lovers in a Yogic pose is a ritual image of the tantric cult in which is created the physical act with an image exhorting harmony in the embrace which derives its strength from the meditation which is supposed to have been gone through before the union.

Transformation:

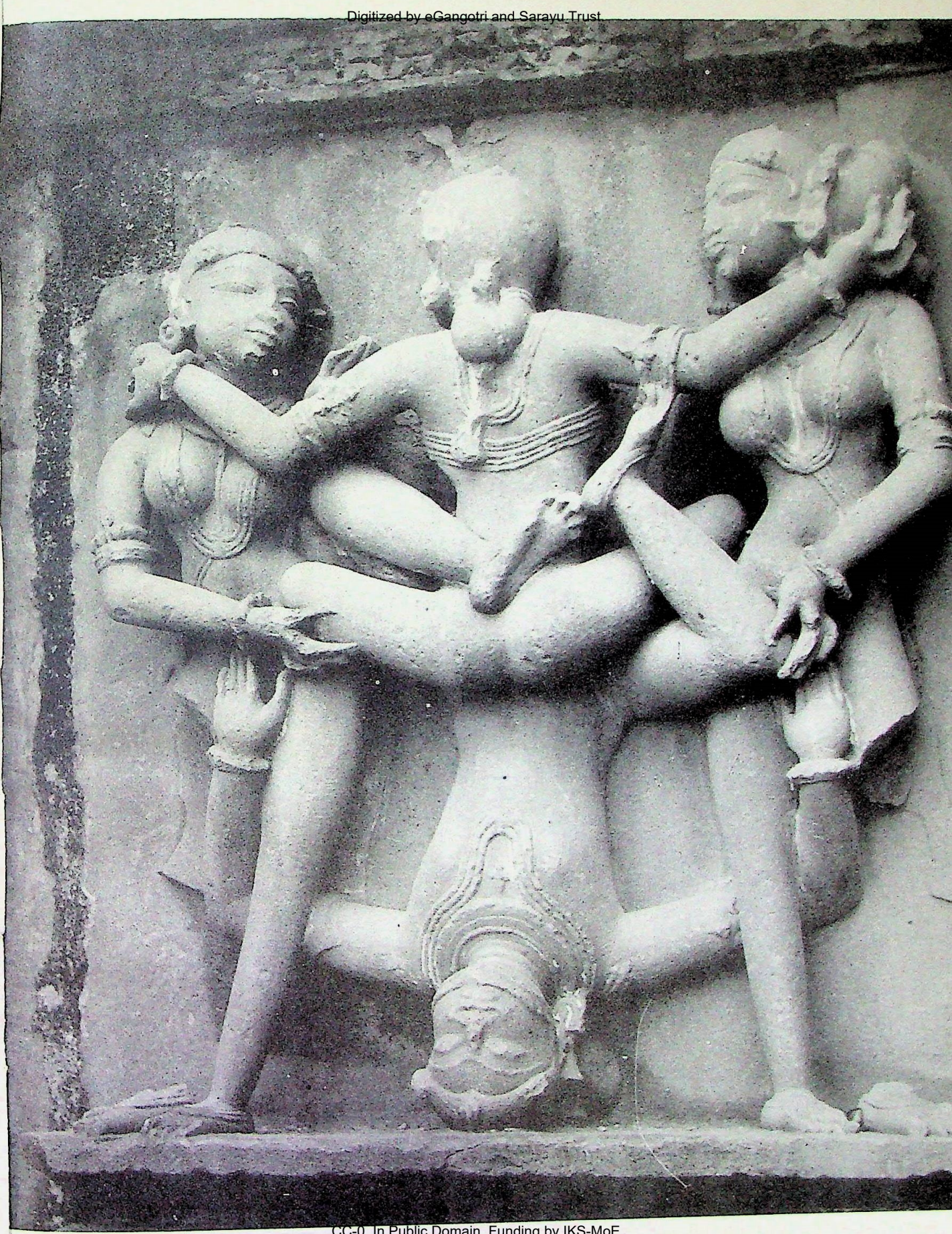
Love human in the creative act is shown here in a similar situation to the one in the Kondariya Mahadeva. The carving here of the embrace which enables the couple and uplifts their union to the heavenly plane is poetically conceived by the carver in tender coherance.

Yogic Stance:

While the Sringara rasas or flavours of love were evoked in the tender connection of couples in normal union, the fusion in the Yoga stance aspired to be non egoistic, as here the selves were to be dissolved in a pure physical mystical act. The carving of the figures is a masterly adumbration of twists and turns, in a composition where the sway of bodies achieves a grace by the relation of lyric flow of limbs and volumes. A masterly sculpture.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust

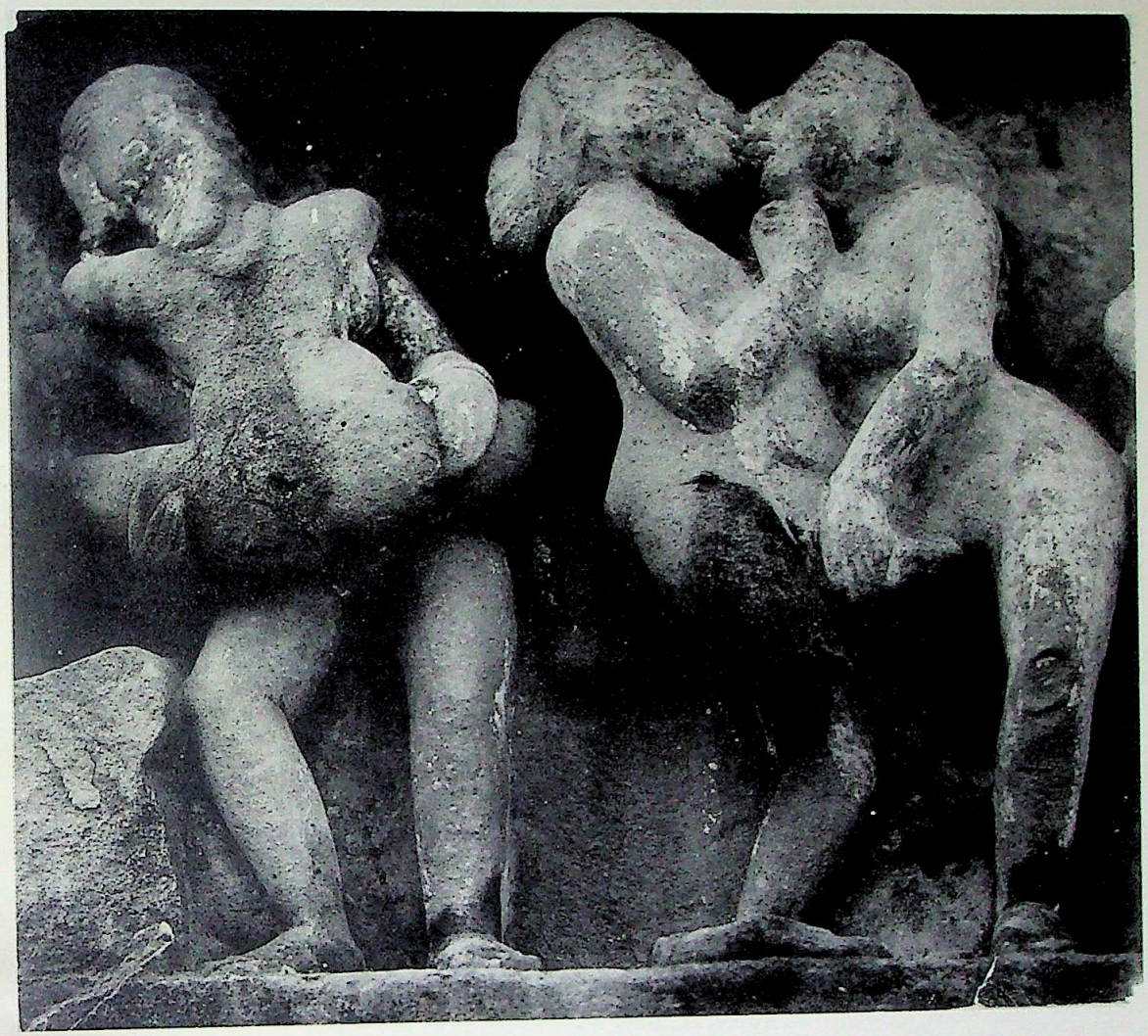


CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



Adbhuta Rasa:

Some of the flavours which were known to be tasted by the folk in the conjugal act of passionate embraces, are shown as course. Tantric yogis wished to elevate sex union above familiar passionate sex.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Bhubaneshwar Shrines: (near eleventh century : A.D.) :

In Bhubaneshwar the flavours of love in the temples were also sought through the worship of Shiva by the sixty four yoginis. The shrine where the worship was carried on is still extant. The figures show that they were carved by village craftsmen for symbolical worship before princely patronage became available, as in the Bhubaneshwar shrines.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Bhubaneshwar

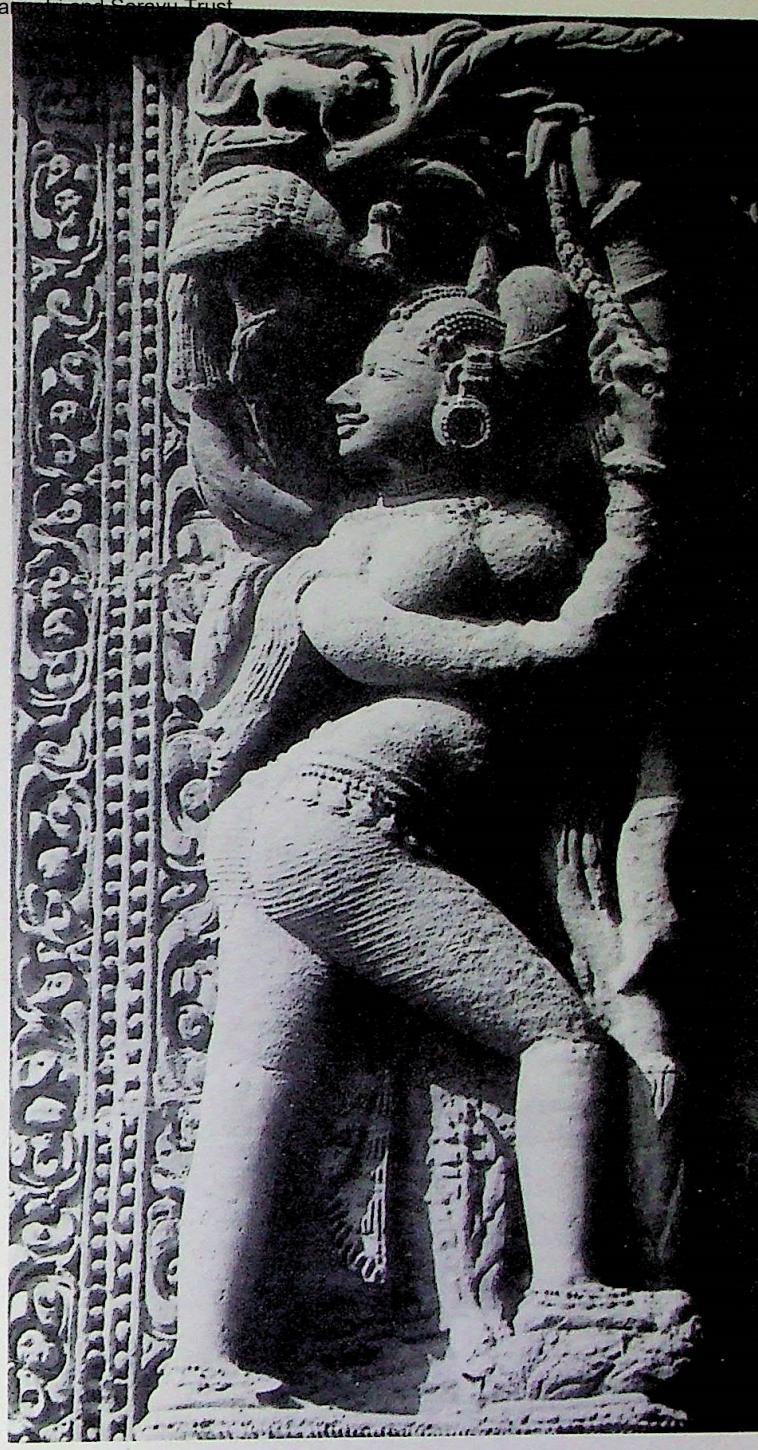
CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

In the various texts in Oriya language of the mediaeval period it seems that the love union evolved to grace somewhat later than in the Vindhyas, though the moods or bhavas outlined by Bharata in the second century A.D. were already known. The Sringara (love) rasa became popular not only in temple sculptures for worship, but also in the Oddisi dance which was a graceful development of the classic art, patronised by the princes in eastern India with the kingdoms of the north.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

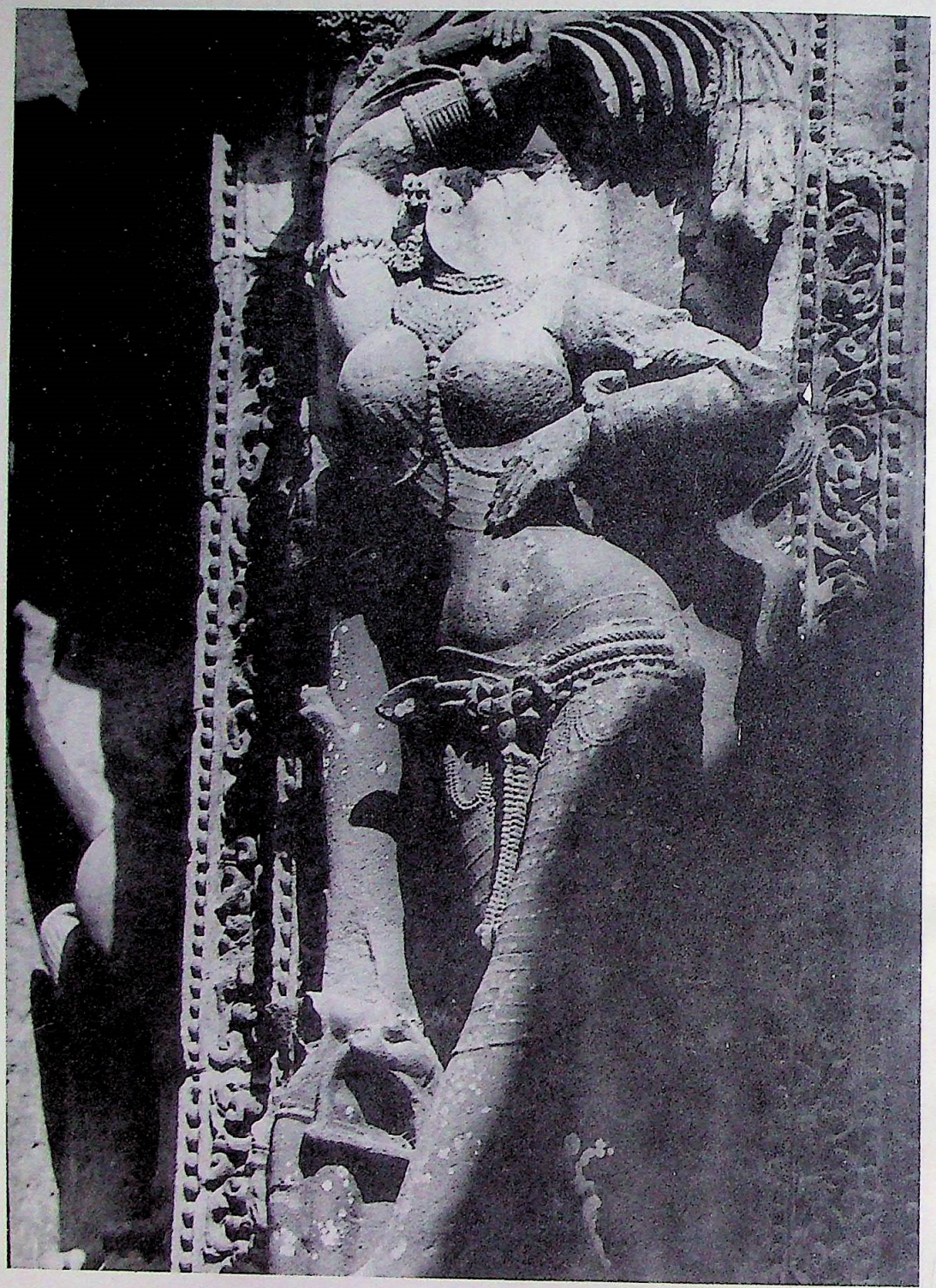
Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust



The lyrical grace of the females in the Bhubaneshwar temples were doubtless influenced by the dance poses of the Oddisi style. Sylphlike creatures, the girls are shown preparing for the celestal event of dance which would induce longings of lovers. The influence of the poet Jayadeva's narration on of the loves of Krishna and Radha in his Gita Govinda seems to have introduced the subtle moods of love into the Shivaite worship of the Sringara (love) rasa.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Konarak

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

Konarak Temple

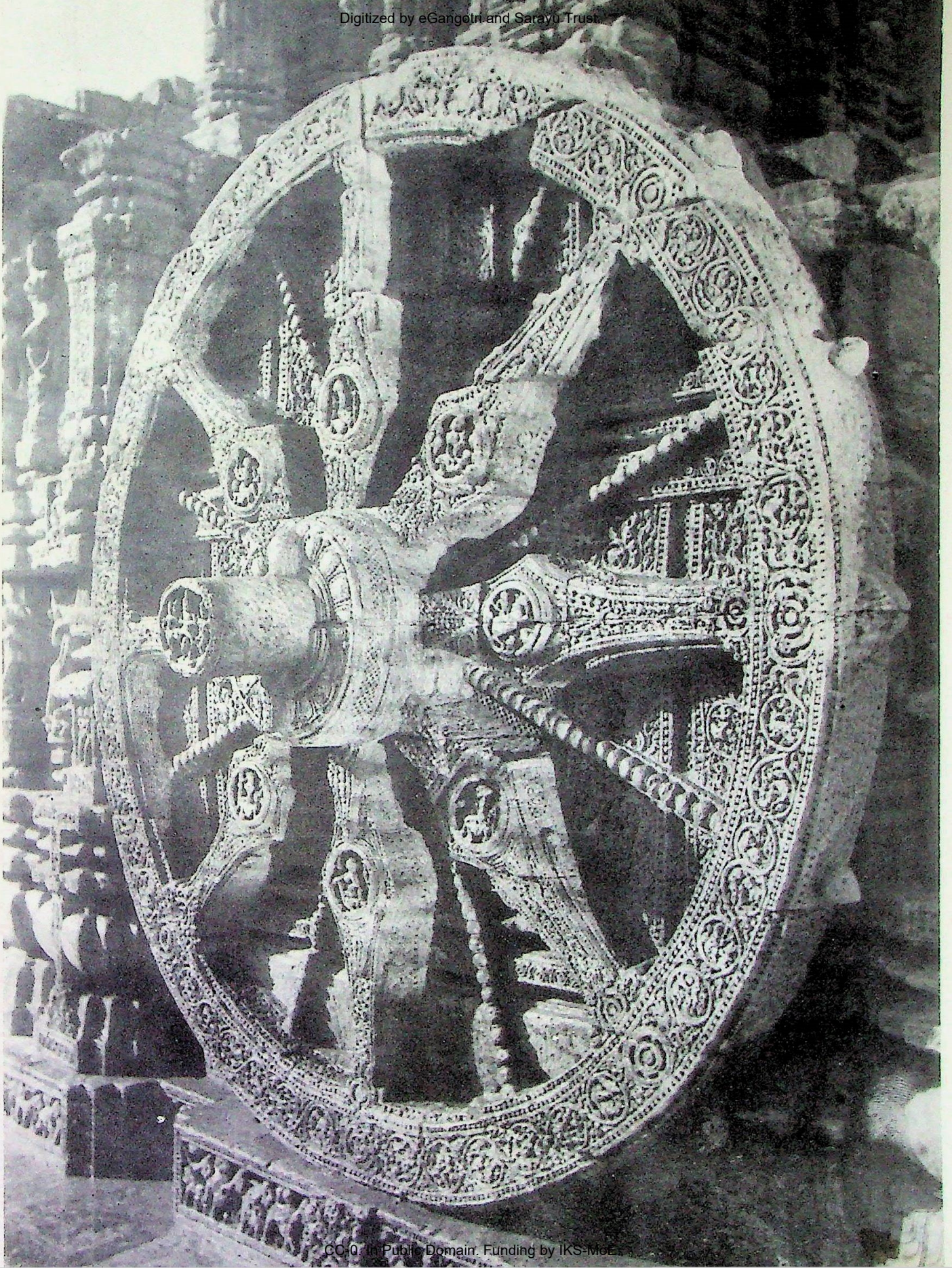
Living in eternity with the sun and the moon and the stars, energising the earth, the prince poet wanted a new beginning in relation to the changes which seasons bring. The sun was ever present. He wanted its rays to be reflected a grand temple, energise people in gayatri hymn which interprets sun energy making life move on earth, in a new creation which may transcend the bare earth by the sea. The inwardness from instinct to emotion and passion to transcendence, was thus to be transformed in an epic temple, symbolic of the universe itself.

The transcendence begins in all the reviewers from the monumental assertion of the great shrine with the giant wheels symbolically carrying the temple towards the sun. And within the spokes of the wheels as on the walls on all sides the craftsmen carved out a whole cosmos of terbulent men and women fleshy, sensual and passionate in the abandon of loving. Konark in the present of that time rose above time itself. It was built in one of the highest moment of Indian romanticism, in 13th century,

The wheels on which the temple is flying to the sun are symbolic of the cycle of life. The spokes show the love of man and woman in little medallions. The male and female connection is indicated as the cycle moves in the spectator's mind.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

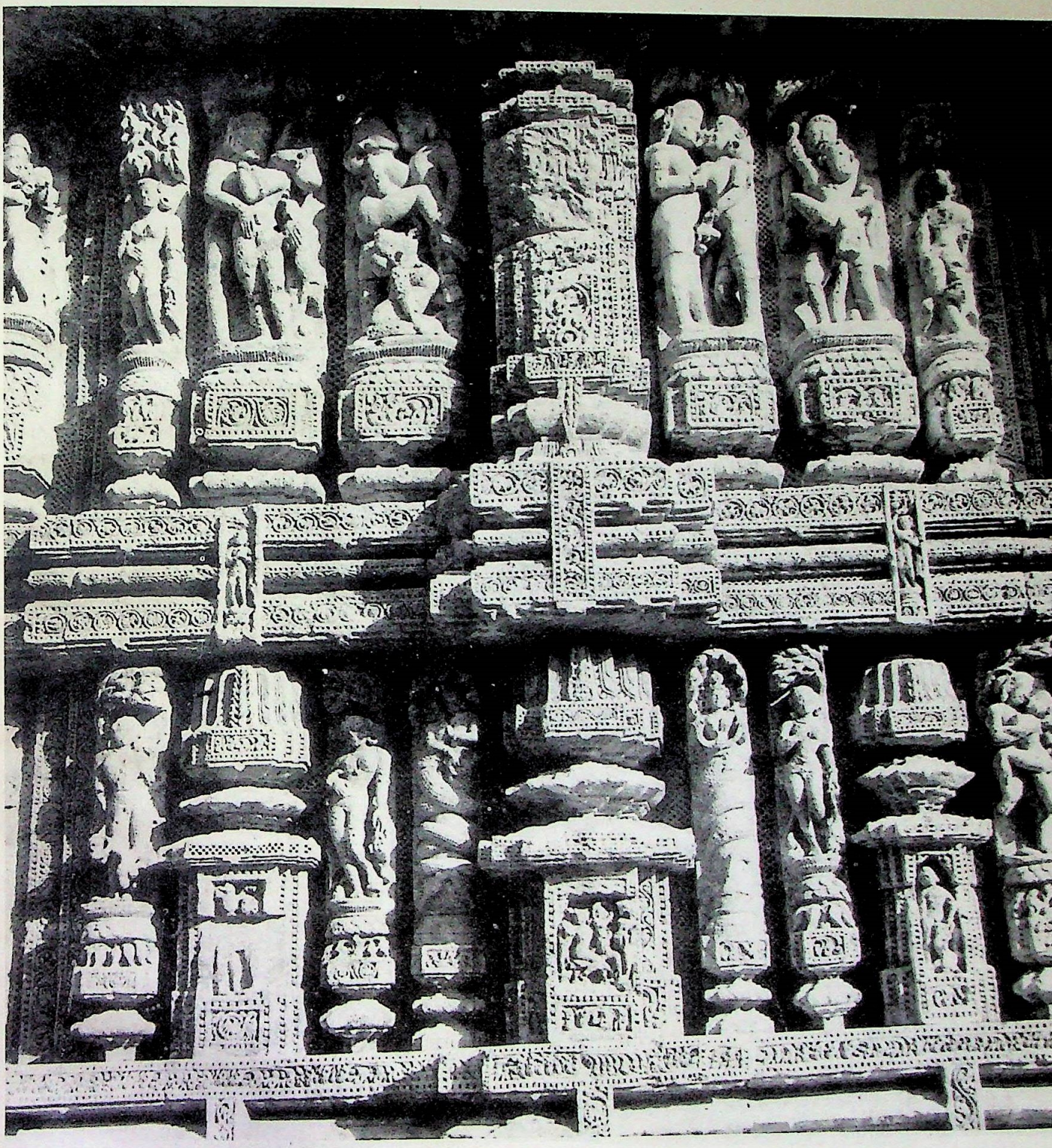
Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by Google

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.



Facade of Konarak temple wall with near geometrical division of panels showing stances of love.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust

When one looks up to the heavens the rays are being welcomed by the apasaras. One plays the flute another playing cymbols and a third the drum—announcing to the world the arrival of the sun.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

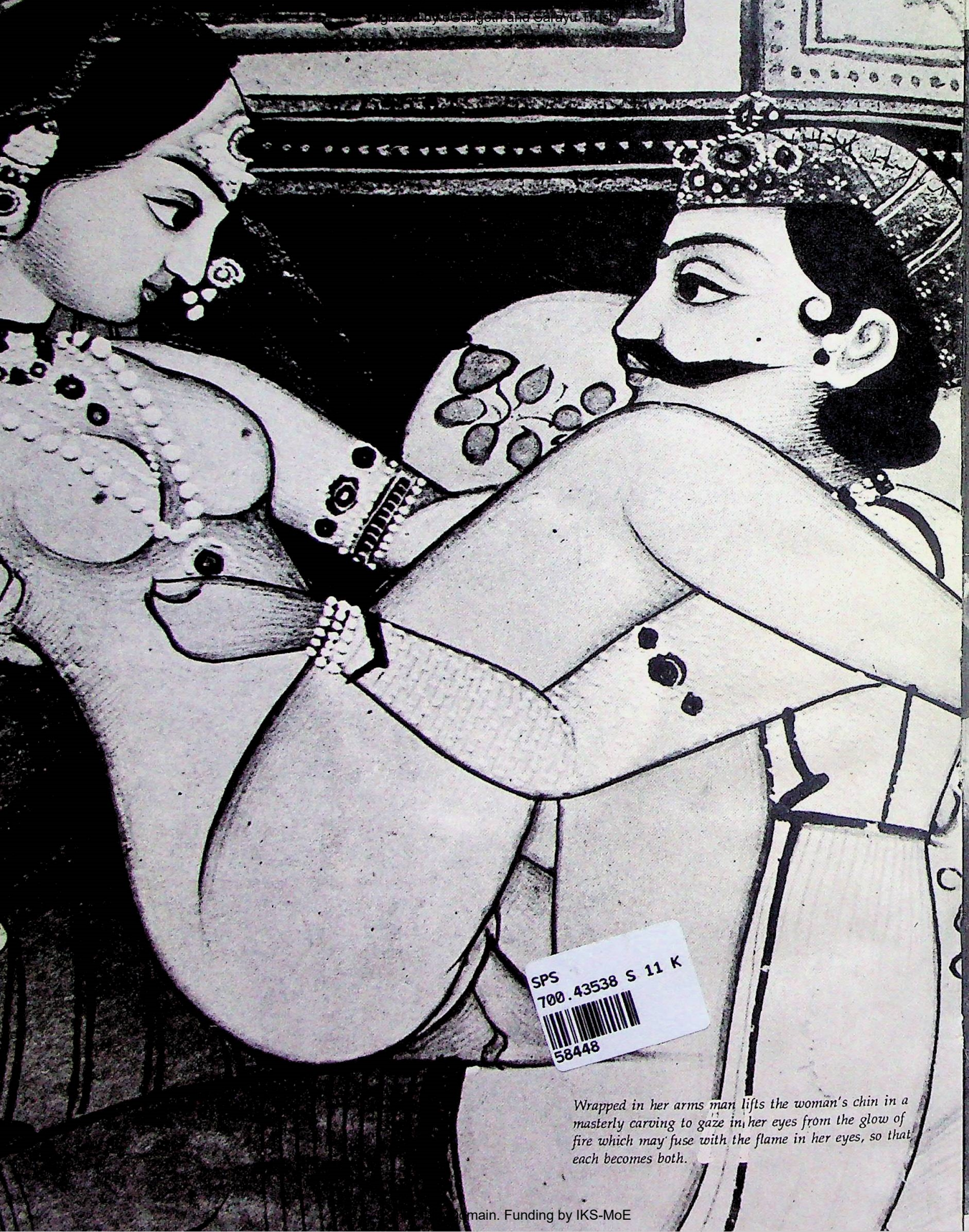
Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

In the silent niches within the walls are lovers in gay union or courting. Figures hewn out larger than in life on whom we gaze till we fuse with the free wedding in a universe which becomes our home.

On one wall the Naga Nagini, the snake couple are lyrically interwined suggesting two body souls wrapped in each other, like the snake god and snake goddess.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by Arya Samaj Foundation Chennai and eGangotri and Sarayu Trust



SPS
700.43538 S 11 K
58448

Wrapped in her arms man lifts the woman's chin in a masterly carving to gaze in her eyes from the glow of fire which may fuse with the flame in her eyes, so that each becomes both.

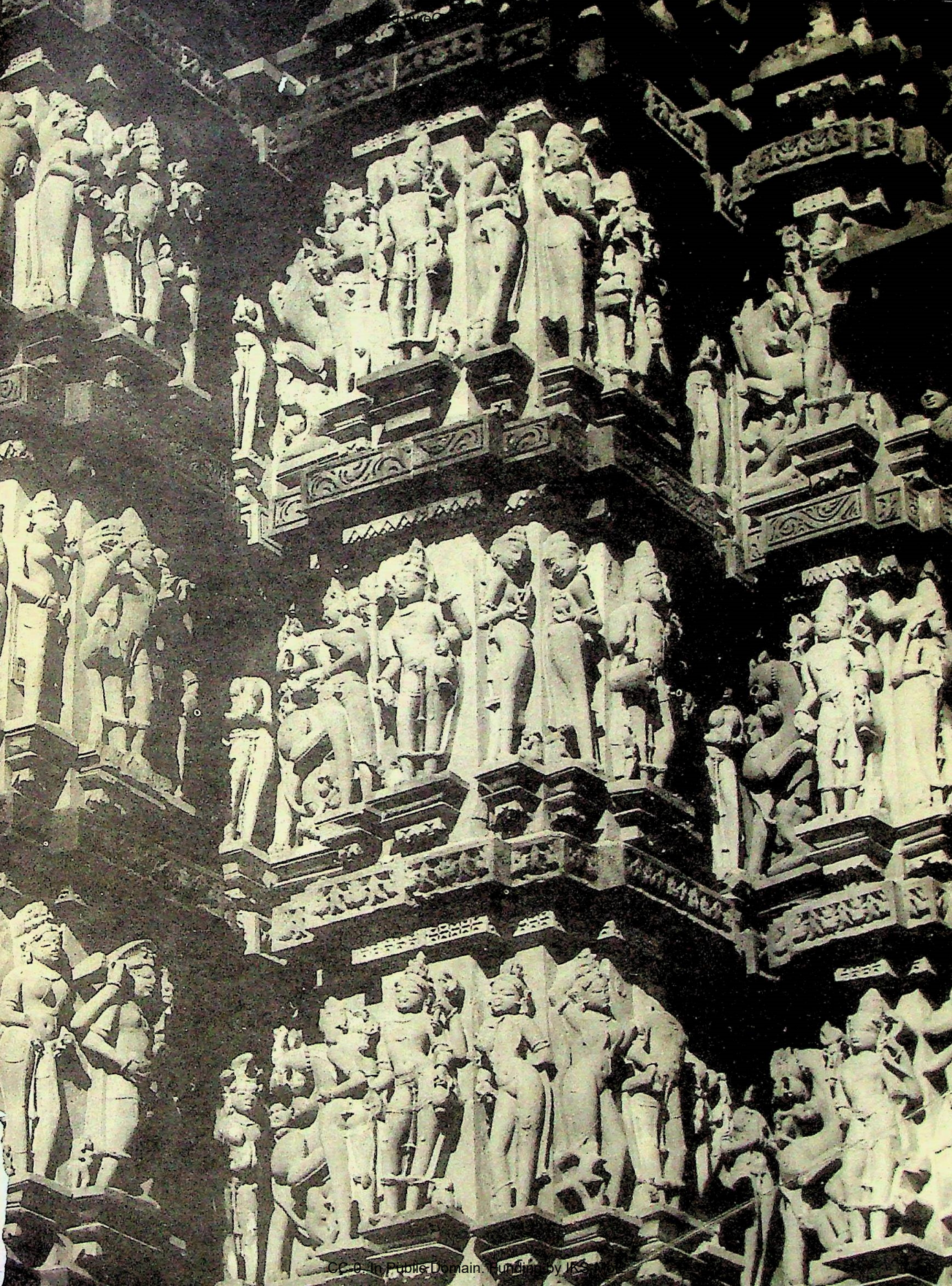
CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE

Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

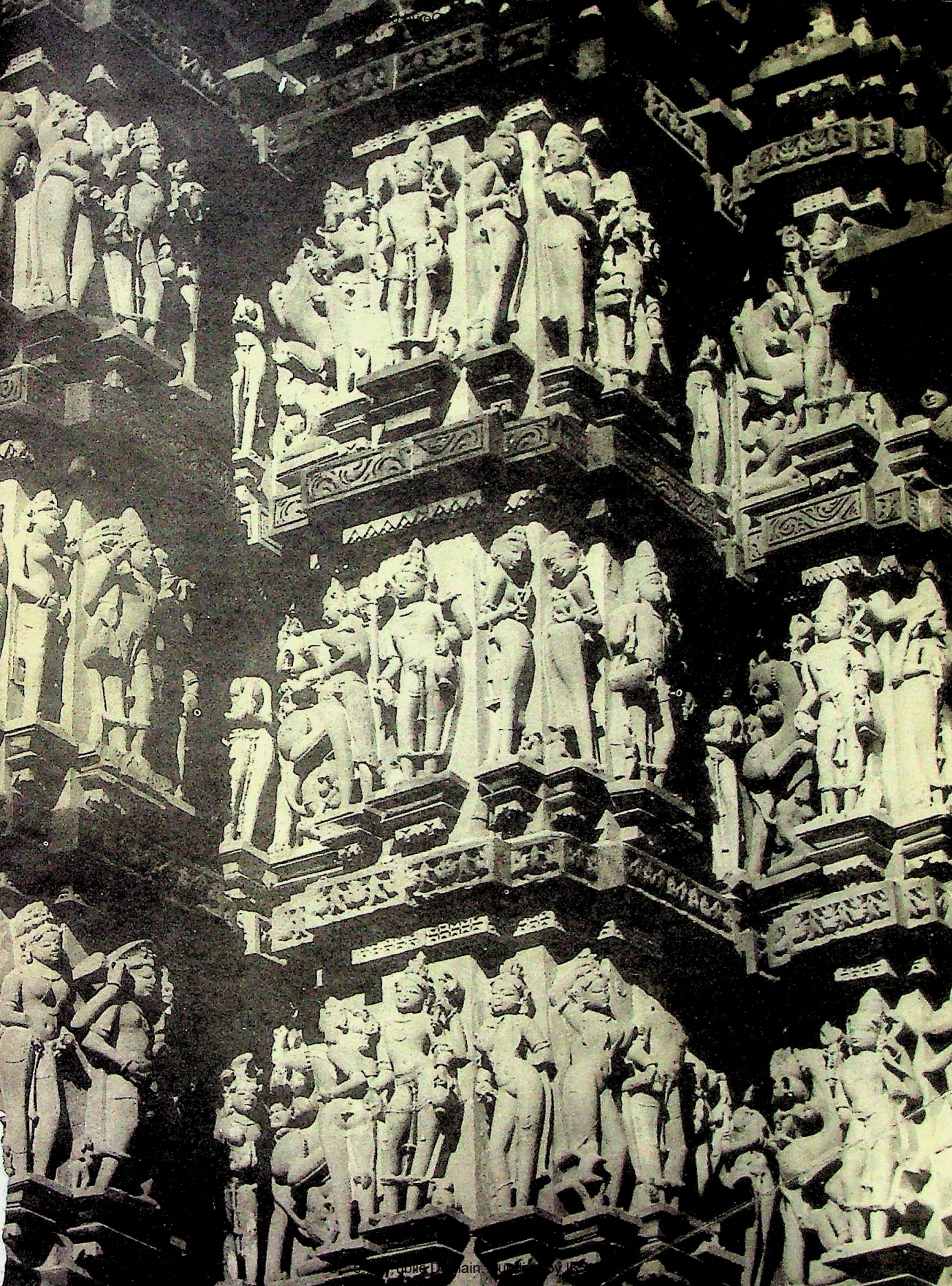
CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE



CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by MoE-IKS

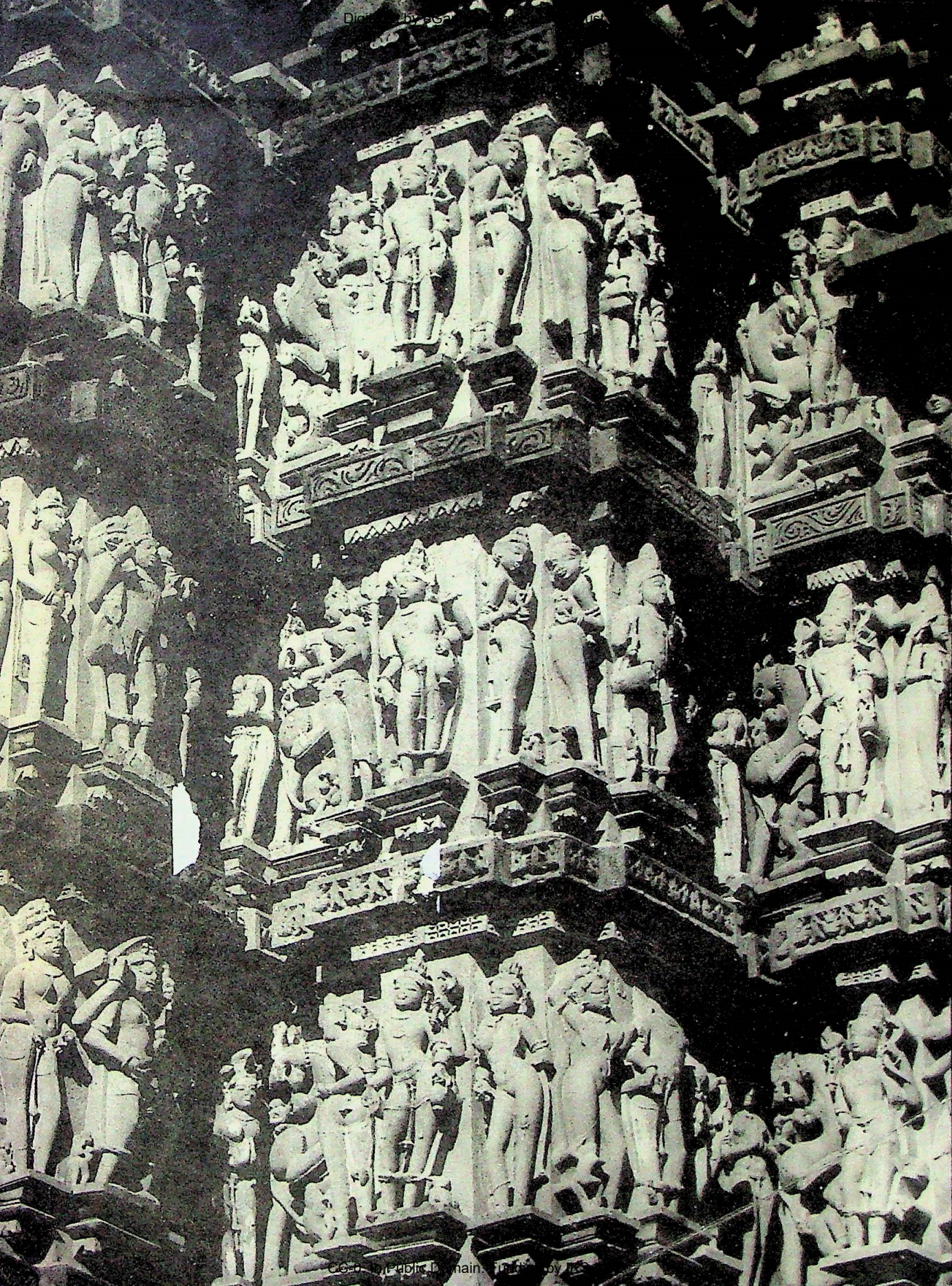
Digitized by eGangotri and Sarayu Trust.

CC-0. In Public Domain. Funding by IKS-MoE



25 वर्षों से राष्ट्र की सेवा में समर्पित
25 YEARS SERVICE TO THE NATION
RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY LIBRARY FOUNDATION
दान द्वारा
राजा राममोहन राय
पुस्तकालय प्रतिष्ठान
GIFTED BY:
RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY LIBRARY FOUNDATION
BLOCK DD-34
SECTOR-1 SALTLAKE
CALCUTTA-700,064

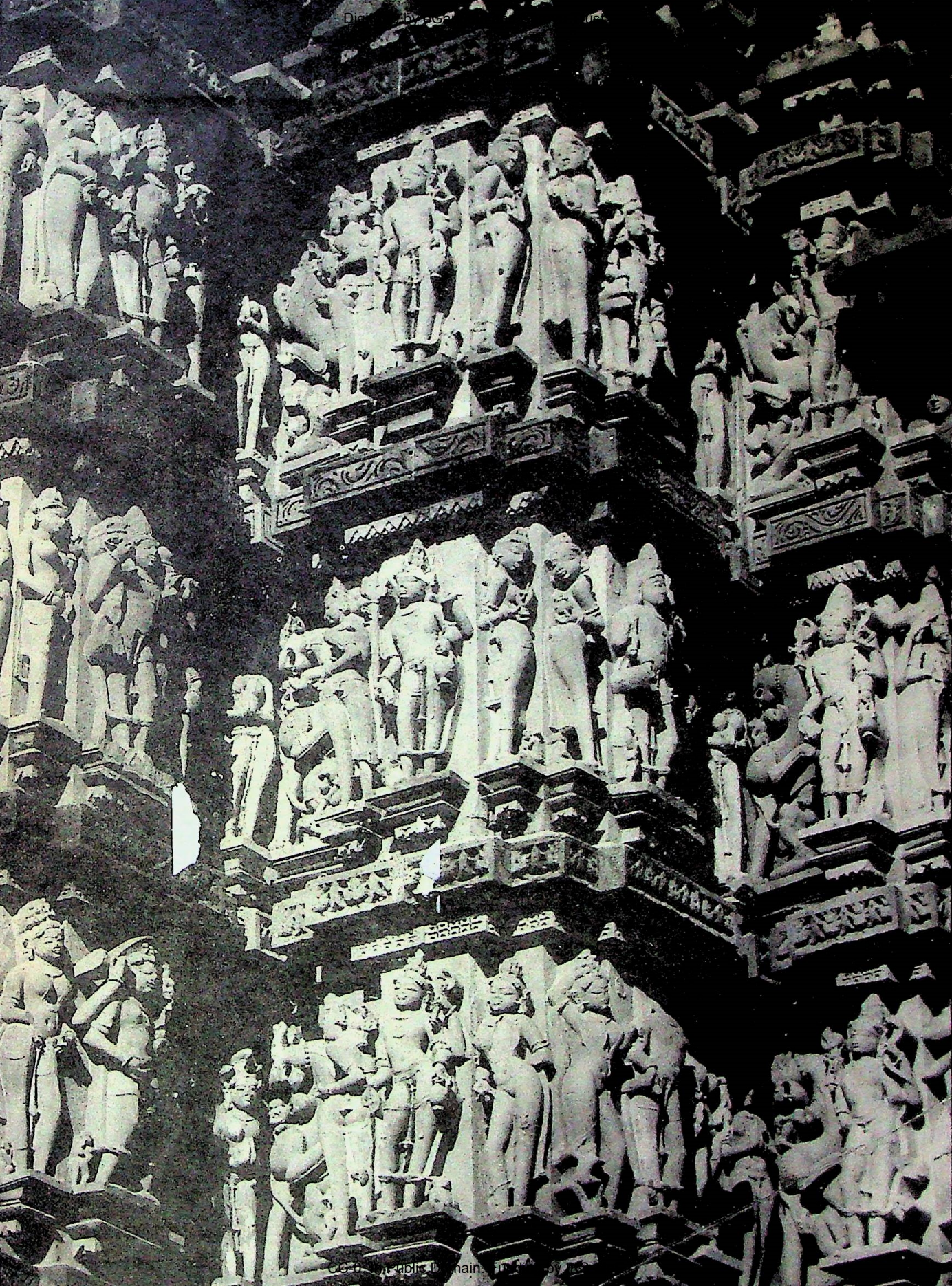
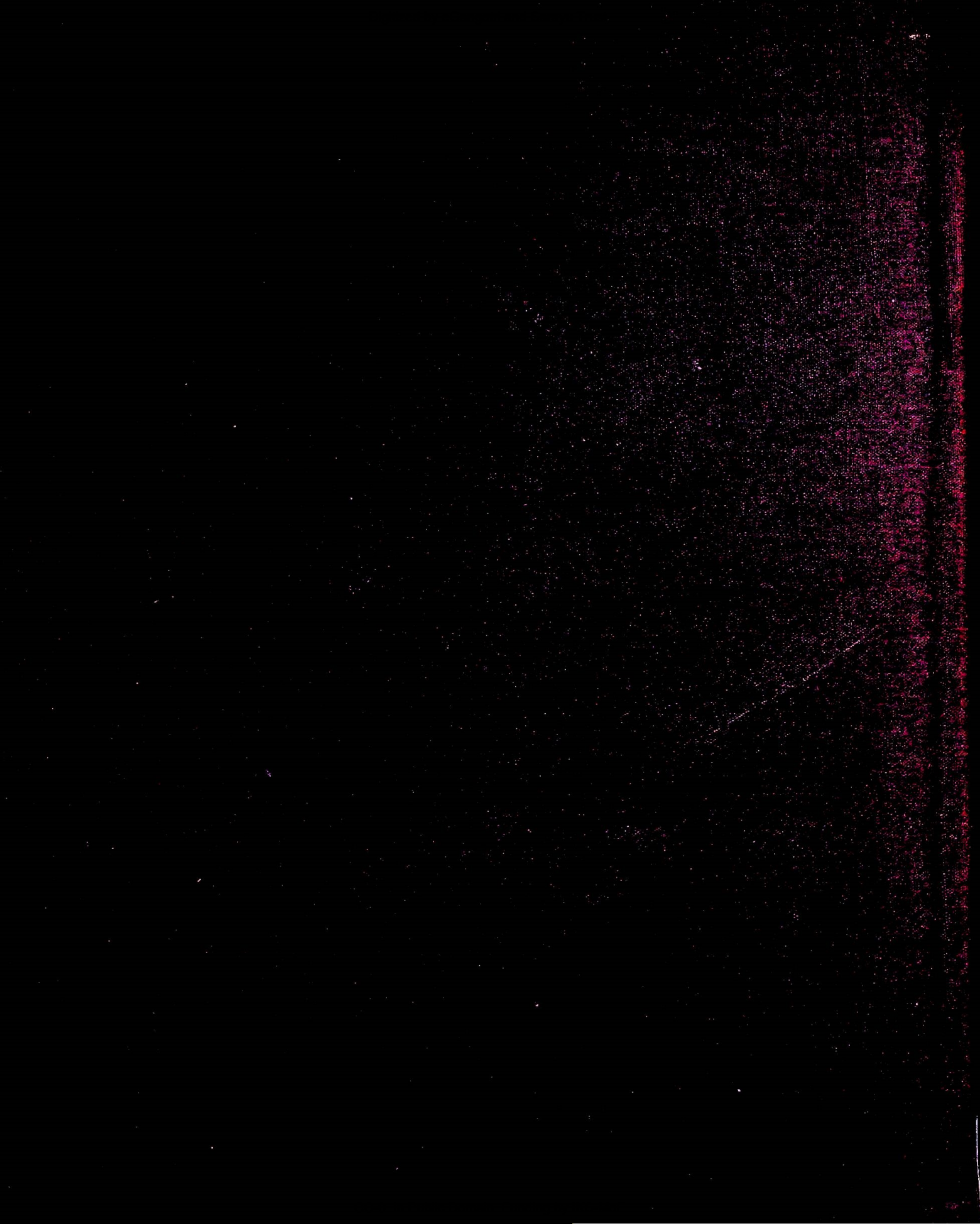
Digitized by [illegible]



CC-0. In Public Domain. Panini Kanya Maha Vidyalaya Collection.

25 वर्षों से राष्ट्र की सेवा में समर्पित
25 YEARS SERVICE TO THE NATION
RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY LIBRARY FOUNDATION
दान द्वारा
राजा राममोहन राय
पुस्तकालय प्रतिष्ठान
GIFTED BY:
RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY LIBRARY FOUNDATION
BLOCK DD-34
SECTOR-1 SALTLAKE
CALCUTTA-700,064

Digitized by



CC-0. Public Domain. Digitized by